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God is Ever-Present

Terri Sherrow
April 21, 2021

Do you ever feel alone and abandoned? These are the times when we struggle on our own, forgetting that there is Someone with us, ready to care, guide, and strengthen us. God assures us we are never without Him as He is everywhere at once and is ever-present. Because His Spirit fills the heavens and the earth, He has the capability to always be with us. We can call on Him with confidence that He hears our prayers and that His Spirit intercedes for us even when we don't know how or what to pray. This attitude about God can give us the peace and comfort knowing that we are never alone and through His Spirit stand firm in our faith.

Read

Psalm 139:7-10: *"Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the*

depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast."

Discuss

How will we know God is with us?

The comfort, peace, and strength we feel when we call on Him is from His presence.

Will God's presence ever leave us?

God's Spirit is always with us. Matthew 28:20: *"... and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

Is God ever too busy for us?

God promises in Hebrews 13:5, *"... Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."*

**“Never will I leave you;
never will I forsake you.**

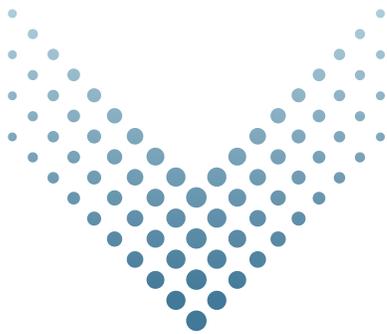
Hebrews 13:5

Pray

Give thanks to God that He is always with us.

Heavenly Father,
Thank you for being a loving Father that never leaves me. I give you all the praise for the peace and comfort that your ever-present Spirit brings. I pray all I do and say reflects your presence.

In your Holy name I pray,
Amen



How to Pray for Grandchildren Facing Challenges

Deborah Haddix

June 28, 2021

Sometimes I am overwhelmed by the challenges facing my grandchildren.

From time to time, I like to text my older grandchildren to ask how I may pray for them. The most recent response from my fifteen-year-old grandson took me aback. Without sharing details that do not need to be shared, the request was for an acquaintance enmeshed in a battle of sexual identity.

Our grandchildren's age doesn't matter. Even the youngest face challenges - selfishness, lying, and disobedience to name a few. And as for our young elementary school-age grands, most face identity and image issues, challenges of character, peer pressure, sexual purity temptations, and the many crises of friendship.

I know you feel it, too. In addition to the challenges mentioned above, most of our grandchildren are facing issues related to materialism, busyness, family, and divorce. They are being assaulted continually by the media and school curriculum that are aligned against Christian values. And some even face the very serious challenges of skepticism, cynicism, homelessness, depression, and suicide.

We hurt for them, children with weight heaped upon their shoulders - weight that is much too heavy even for adults to carry. When we are overcome by the weight they carry, the most powerful thing we can do for our grandchildren is to pray. Ephesians 6 tells us that through prayer, Satan's schemes and forces toward our grandchildren can be stopped. Prayer is the means through which God is moved to shape lives. When your grandchildren are facing

challenges, and you want to pray but aren't sure HOW, consider these eight ways to pray as you seek God's power on their behalf.

8 Ways to Pray for Grandchildren Facing Challenges

1. PRAYER JOURNALS

Pray using a journal. There are many types of prayer journals, but no matter the type, a few things are common to all.

First, it is important to remember that prayer journals are working documents, not keepsakes. This is particularly important to keep in mind when using journals that incorporate photographs.

Prayer journals, no matter the type, serve as reminders to pray and help us stay focused during our prayers. In addition to providing a place for recording our grandchildren's prayer requests and other prayer specifics, journals help us take a closer look at what is

happening in our own mind and heart as we pray. They also help our personal relationship with God to grow deeper and give us a beautiful visual record of God's faithfulness in the lives of our family.

The following are three types of Prayer Journals that are well suited to praying for grandchildren facing challenges:

Traditional Prayer Journals

If you've ever used a prayer journal, more likely than not, it was this one. Traditional Prayer Journals are a simple and effective way to pray for your grandchildren. For this type of journal all you need is some type of book (a fancy store-bought journal, an inexpensive composition notebook, or anything in between) and something to write with. To begin, simply section off your journal by categories. Consider including any of the following: requests, prayers, praises, answers to

prayer, favorite Scriptures, favorite quotes, notes, photos. In your journal, keep an ongoing record of your prayers for your grandchildren.

Note: A couple of very helpful tips for keeping this and other types of prayer journals are to:

- *Include the date each time you make an entry into your prayer journal.*
- *Record answers to prayer requests in a second color of ink.*

Picture Prayer Journals

A Picture Prayer Journal is perfect for the grandparent who is more visually wired. Identical in purpose to the Traditional Prayer Journal, the difference lies in the set-up. Instead of being set up by categories, the Picture Prayer Journal is set up by child. Begin each new section with an "info" page for one of your grandchildren. On this page, record the child's name and birthday in an upper corner. In the opposite corner, attach a small photo of the child. On

the remainder of that page and all subsequent pages, record prayer requests, praises, answers to prayer, and any other notes you like.

Set-up Note: Determine how many pages are in your new journal. Then divide that number by the number of grandchildren you are praying for. This will help you create balanced sections and enable you to use the book for a longer period of time.

Legacy Prayer Journals

Another take on prayer journals, the Legacy Prayer Journal is kept by multiple generations of a family: grandparents and grandchildren or grandparents, parents, and grandchildren. Like the Traditional Prayer Journal, this type of journal is sectioned off by categories. It is different, however, in the fact that it is not “private” to one individual. Rather, all family members make entries, pray, and praise together. Keeping a Legacy

Prayer Journal promotes communication, builds connection, and encourages modeling and discussion of prayer.

Note: You don't have to live near your grandchildren to keep a Legacy Prayer Journal. Long-distance grandparents can make use of technology to elicit entries, pray, and share praises.

2. PRAYER BOX

For this creative prayer technique, you, first, need a box. Any container will do – cardboard, plastic, decorated, undecorated, or store bought. Additionally, you will need a bag of small stones or marbles. These will represent your prayer requests. The method is simple. Place one of your chosen objects in the box for each request shared during prayer. For added impact, you might choose a second small object to represent “answers to your prayers.” Over time, your box will become a “picture” of your prayers for your grandchildren.

3. TRIGGERS

Does your grandchild have a favorite song? If so, each time you hear the song take a moment to pray for him. How about a favorite food or activity? If your grandchild is crazy about strawberries, pray when you eat strawberries. If another goes bonkers over baseball, then pray when you drive past a baseball game. A prayer trigger is simply something you have identified as a reminder to pray.

Here's one more. Photos are a great trigger. Grandparents are notorious for having a multitude of photos of their grandchildren. Use the photos as reminders to pray.

4. PRAY THE ALPHABET

Use the alphabet as a framework for your prayer. Beginning with the letter A and working all the way through to Z, pray one specific thing for your grandchild. Each petition or offer of thanksgiving in your prayer should begin with the next letter of the alphabet until you have completed the alphabet.

An engaging way to pray over the challenges your grandchildren face, the letters of the alphabet prompt you to think specifically about struggles, needs, relationships, things you are grateful for and other details.

5. PRAY IN COLOR FOR YOUR GRANDCHILDREN

A prayer technique developed by Sybil MacBeth, [Praying in Color](#) invites us to keep our hands moving as we pray. As we doodle, draw, and/or color our "prayer," we more easily stay focused on our prayer and the challenges facing our grandchildren. Before you discount this method because you are "not an artist," please know that neither am I. Yet this is one of my all-time favorite ways to pray for my grandchildren. For a closer look at the process, check out Sybil's website or my web page detailing how I typically engage in this unique prayer technique.

6. WRITE A PRAYER

Write out your prayer for your grandchild. Choose any form you like – journal entry, poem, Psalm, or letter. Tips for choosing the format of your written prayer:

Journal Entries – Simply write what comes to mind as it comes to mind. Don't worry about organizing your thoughts, mechanics, or writing conventions.

Poems – Remember that there are many styles of poetry. Don't get locked into "everything must rhyme." Think outside the box – haiku, acrostic, ABC, narrative, free form, and more.

Psalm – A Psalm is a sacred song or poem used in worship.
Letter – Try addressing your letter prayer to your Heavenly Father or to the grandchild for whom you are praying.

Letter – Try addressing your letter prayer to your Heavenly Father or to the grandchild for whom you are praying.

7. 30-DAY PRAYER CHALLENGE

If your grandchild is facing a particularly difficult challenge (and even if they are not), consider committing to thirty consecutive days of prayer on their behalf. A free 30-Day Prayer Challenge booklet is available to help you in this purposeful, intentional, and specific work of prayer. The booklet contains thirty Scripture-based prayer prompts as well as other helpful resources.

Note: Christian Grandparenting Network will be observing the 30-Day Prayer Challenge on our Facebook page beginning August 14, 2021, and culminating on Grandparents' Day of Prayer, September 12, 2021. Find encouragement and accountability in your prayers by joining with others for this powerful time of corporate prayer.



8. GRANDPARENTS' DAY OF PRAYER

Here's another powerful way to pray for your grandchildren facing challenges.

Grandparents' Day of Prayer is observed annually on the second Sunday in September. (This is the same day designated as National Grandparents' Day by the United States, hopefully, making it a little easier to remember.)

On this day, grandparents from around the globe unite in prayer with other grandparents to pray on behalf of their grandchildren.

"Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."
Matthew 18:19-20

Corporate prayer, no matter the size of the group (two, six, or fifty), is a tremendous tool when praying for our grandchildren and the challenges they face.

For more information on [Grandparents' Day of Prayer](#) visit [Christian Grandparenting Network](#).

More effective than throwing up our hands in despair or worrying about things over which we have no control, there is power in prayer. Power that unleashes eternity-impacting results.

“

When we are overcome by the weight they carry, the most powerful thing we can do for our grandchildren is to pray.

Ways to Cultivate a Spirit of Thankfulness

Sherry Schumann
October 25, 2021

As October draws to a close and we turn our attention toward Thanksgiving, we are faced with myriad questions. Do we want a fifteen-pound turkey or Cornish hens? Should we make cornbread or oyster dressing? Will our guests prefer to eat in the formal dining room or have a more casual gathering outdoors?

The questions seem endless. Sadly, we often overlook the most important question of all. How do we cultivate a spirit of thankfulness in our families?

Let's begin by considering the phrase, "steadfast love." Do you know these two words appear together 196 times in the Old Testament? More than sixty percent of these times occur in the Book of Psalms. Time and again the Psalmists encourage us to remember the steadfastness of God's love.

This word steadfast means unchanging, irrefutable, without end.

To take this one step further, if we look at Psalm 136, we see that the Psalmist calls the people of Israel to remember God's endless love throughout history, starting with creation, deliverance from Egypt, and provision of heritage in the Promised Land. Every remembrance listed here points us to the redemption and restoration found only in Christ.

How do we respond to God's steadfast love? We start by looking at ways to reclaim Thanksgiving as a time for giving thanks. Here are ideas that you may want to consider:

Pumpkin Centerpiece

- Place a pumpkin in the center of a table. Place two or three black markers beside the pumpkin.
- Ask your family to write the things for which they are thankful on the pumpkin.

Blessing Jar

- Name the things for which everyone in your family is thankful. Don't forget the things we take for granted such as electricity, running water, the ability to see, God's creation, etc.
- Record each item mentioned on a piece of colored paper (sticky notes work great) or this [template](#). The template has a turkey, which your grandchildren may want to color.
- You may want to store these notes in a glass jar. This becomes your family's blessing jar, which you can use for years to come.
- If you want to create a Blessing journal to pass down to your children and grandchildren, you can record these blessings on a [Blessing Memory Sheet](#) and keep them in a decorative notebook.

Thanksgiving Show-n-Tell

- Invite every family member to bring something for a Thanksgiving show-n-tell.
- Ask each member to show the item they brought and explain why they are thankful for it.

Gratitude Garland

- Use this [template](#) to create Thanksgiving cards. It works best if you print them on cardstock. Make sure you have plenty.
- Use a hole punch to place a hole at the top of the card.
- When your guests arrive, ask them to write down one blessing per card.
- Invite your grandchildren to help you string the cards on colorful yarn. Hang the gratitude garland in a prominent place for everyone to see.

“*Time and again the Psalmists encourage us to remember the steadfastness of God's love.*”

Thanksgiving Wreath

- Ask each family member to trace their hands on at least three pieces of brightly colored construction paper.
- Cut out these tracings.
- Discuss some of the things for which they are thankful.
- Write one thing per hand.
- Glue the hands to a piece of poster board in the shape of a wreath.
- Hang the wreath on a door or over the mantle for all to see.

Thanksgiving Memory Game

- Gather in a circle.
- The youngest child begins the game by saying, "I am thankful for _____."
- The next person in the circle says, "I am thankful for _____" and then repeats what the youngest child said.
- The next person in the circle says, "I am thankful for _____" and then repeats in order the blessings that were mentioned.

Thanksgiving Guessing Game

- When everyone arrives, give them three index cards. Ask them to write one blessing for which they are thankful on each of the cards. (You may need to help your grandchildren fill out the cards.)
- Fold the cards and place them in a bowl.
- Ask for a volunteer to grab one of the cards and read it aloud.
- Let everyone guess who wrote down this blessing.
- Continue until all the cards are done or the turkey is cooked.

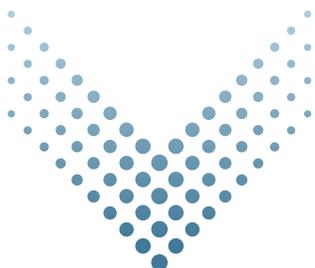
Puzzle Piece Scavenger Hunt

Prior to Thanksgiving Day, write on index cards (one or two words per card), *"Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!" (Psalm 107:1).* Hide these cards somewhere in the main room of your home. Consider the ages of your grandchildren as you

- choose the difficulty with which you hide the cards. *Note: You may want to write yourself a note listing the locations of the cards.*
- Teach your grandchildren how to play the hot-and-cold game. Hot means they are getting close to finding a card; cold means they are walking away from a card.
- Once the cards are found, assemble the words to form the phrase. Ask everyone to memorize this phrase. Don't forget to include the Scripture address: Psalm 107:1.

Holiday Hospitality

Pay God's love forward by extending the gift of hospitality. Invite someone who would otherwise be alone (single person, widow, widower) to join you and your family for your Thanksgiving celebrations.



Personal Notes

After Thanksgiving, write a note of blessing to each of the guests who attended your Thanksgiving feast. Include the reasons you give thanks to God for them.

Thanksgiving Virtual-Style

- If miles separate you from your grandchildren this year, you may want to consider sending them a roll of butcher paper, markers and masking tape. Ask them to create a Thanksgiving Graffiti Board by writing down or drawing a picture of the things for which they are thankful on a large sheet of the butcher paper. Encourage them to cover the paper with drawing and words.
- Have them explain the board to you during your conference call. You may want to make a graffiti board and explain it to them as well.

FINAL NOTE:

May we all celebrate a Christ-centered Thanksgiving, one that is filled with remembrances of God's blessings. One that shouts aloud, "Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!" (Psalm 107:1).

“*Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!*”

Psalm 107:1

DIY Grandcamp

Larry McCall
February 8, 2021

We were still putting things away from this year's Grandcamp when we started talking about what we could do for next year's Grandcamp. It had been a great week. Though we were tired, we were happy and grateful. This had been our fourth year of hosting our grandkids for five days of enjoying "Lots of Love! Lots of Fun!" to quote my wife, Gladine.

Having initially heard of the concept of Grandcamp from our friend Cavin Harper in 2017, Gladine and I began to wonder what it would take to do our own Grandcamp. Taking our grandkids to an established traditional Grandcamp that involved multiple families and was hosted by a trained camp staff sounded like a wonderful idea, but we were limited by time, geography, and finances. Would we be able to do Grandcamp here at our home - a "DIY Grandcamp," as it were?

We began praying and planning. The first year went so well that our grandkids wanted us to do it again. And so we did, again and again and again – four years so far, each year building on our previous experiences.

So, what have we learned about having a “Do It Yourself Grandcamp” that may be an encouragement for you to do something similar? Here are some highlights that I trust you will find helpful:

Pray: We need God’s help. We want God’s help. So, let’s ask.

- Ask for discernment and direction: Are there particular needs in the lives of our grandchildren that we might be able to address in a loving, focused way at Grandcamp?
- Ask for unity: Families are usually made up of a variety of personalities and preferences spanning three generations. How might we work together to make it a great Grandcamp?

- Ask for the Lord’s work in the lives of the grandkids, and grandparents. Ask the Lord to use Grandcamp for His glory and the good of our grandchildren.
- Ask for strength. No matter the size of our flock of grandkids, their energy level, and ours, we will need God’s empowerment to keep up – and to do so with joy.

Plan: Though our plans are always submitted to God’s sovereignty, taking the time to plan will make Grandcamp more enjoyable for everyone.

Plan the “theme” for Grandcamp. We have found having a memorable spiritual theme was especially helpful. One year we used Marty Machowski’s *Listen up: Ten Minute Family Devotionals on the Parables*. I planned short devotionals for each mealtime and bedtime, drawing Scripture illustrations, activities, and applications from this book. So the theme

that year was “Listen Up!” It went so well that the following year we used Marty’s book *Wise Up: Ten Minute Devotionals in Proverbs*. “Wise Up” made a great theme that year. For the following two years I drew from my own book *Walking Like Jesus Did*. Pick a theme for the entire Grandcamp with daily “sub-themes.” You might want to plan a memory verse for the week or even daily memory verses to work on together.

Plan the dates for Grandcamp. Talk to your adult children about their family’s calendar. When might be the best days for Grandcamp? If you have grandchildren from multiple families, this will take some coordination, so it may be best to work on establishing dates for Grandcamp months in advance, if possible. We’ve enjoyed blocking out five days for Grandcamp (Monday morning through Friday evening), but that might be a bit much for your situation. Decide what would work best for you and your family. Get it

on the calendar and start talking it up with your kids and grandkids, watching the excitement grow with each intervening interaction.

Plan the activities for Grandcamp. You will want to incorporate activities that are fun to think about and plan. If your budget is limited, don’t let that keep you and your grandkids from experiencing the “Lots of Love! Lots of Fun!” that Gladine talks excitedly about. What backyard games could you plan? How about indoor activities in case of inclement weather? If you have some older grandkids, ask them to help come up with ideas. They might even like to be in charge of a game, activity, or craft project. Don’t have your own pool? Ask a friend or neighbor to let you borrow their pool. Are there any kid-friendly activities in your community that your grandchildren would enjoy? Check them out ahead of time and include some in your planning. Is there a Christian friend you would like to invite

as a guest to tell their testimony? Think of ice cream shops you might want to visit – or have a “create your own sundae” activity in your home. If you’re concerned about having too much planned, build in “quiet time” in the afternoon for napping or reading. How about scheduling some “free time” for the kids to play together? We like to call it “cousin time,” encouraging the growth of those family relationships. We’ve enjoyed planning some winding-down time in the evenings, when we watch a Torchlighters (<https://torchlighters.org>) video with the grandkids before evening Bible time, prayer, and bedtimes.

Plan the daily schedule. Having a planned-ahead-of-time daily schedule has been helpful not only to us grandparents, but for the grandkids, too. We’ve actually posted the daily schedule on the kitchen wall so the kids who are old enough to read can see what we’ll be doing that day, Lord willing. We list

meals, activities and a devotional theme for the day. By the way, we keep these in a file so we can refer back as we think through the coming year’s Grandcamp.

Plan the meals. Depending on the number of your grandchildren, meal prep could feel daunting at this season of life. Talk to your kids about any dietary limitations so you can plan accordingly. We try to plan simple meals that the kids will like, with their parents’ approval. We’ve enjoyed including the (older) grandkids in our planning, asking them ahead of time if they would like to choose a meal to help plan and prepare. Fun! Keep it simple. Involve the grandchildren as much as they are able in the prep, set up, clean up, etc. This is good training for serving one another. By planning the meals ahead of time, the shopping can be done before camp starts, eliminating the need for repeated runs to the grocery store, taking one of you away from Grandcamp activities.

- **Plan the end-of-camp “blessings”.** Cavin Harper introduced us to the value of having planned times of blessing each of our grandchildren. For each of the four Grandcamps we’ve had so far, we’ve ended the week by inviting the parents to join us for a closing dinner and hearing highlights from each of the grandchildren. Then as the “patriarch,” I asked each of the young ones to come in turn beside me. I placed my hand on them and read prepared, personalized “blessings,” noting God’s grace in their lives, asked God’s blessing for their futures, and declared their grandmother’s and my commitment to walk with them on their journey as long as we have life. The grandkids of all ages have demonstrated how much they look forward to “Papa’s blessing.” (I give hard copies of each blessing to the child and a second copy to his or her parents).

Engage: By planning our devotions, meals and activities ahead of time, we have greater freedom to engage with our grandchildren as a group or one-on-one. We don’t want the activities or meal prep to be so consuming that we miss those opportunities for eye contact, meaningful conversations, and just plain laughter-filled fun times. By God’s grace, let’s be “in the moment” with our precious grandchildren during their time with us at Grandcamp.

Rejoice! Let’s look back on our time with our grandchildren at Grandcamp, thanking God for His work in each of our lives, even while we begin to pray and dream about next year’s Grandcamp.

“

*Pray
Plan
Engage
Rejoice*

How to Help Your Grandchildren Understand and Defend Their Faith

Josh Mulvihill
February 1, 2021

You have helped train your grandchildren in the Christian faith. They are familiar with key Bible characters and stories, even memorized Scripture passages. You've explained the Gospel. They know that Jesus died on the cross for their sins and rose again. They have even had some significant experiences that have profoundly shaped them. They should be safe, right?

What will they do when someone makes a claim and provides "evidence" that the resurrection never happened? Or that the Bible is full of errors? Or that Christianity is guilty of horrible evils in history? Suddenly, "because mom or dad, grandma or grandpa said so" doesn't work. Even as early as grade school, children are hearing other

voices that seek to undermine everything that you and other spiritual authorities taught them.

Young people will not remain faithful to a faith they do not understand and cannot defend. In a post-Christian culture, it is more critical than ever for young people to know what they believe, why they believe it, and are prepared to defend themselves from attacks to their faith. Throughout church history this has been known as apologetics.

Apologetics is the defense of the Christian faith. Peter states that Christians are to be prepared, "to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15). A portion of Paul's ministry included a defense of the Gospel, "I am appointed for a defense of the gospel" (Philippians 1:16).



Apologists are individuals who defend Christian beliefs and practices against attacks, provide arguments for the truthfulness of Christianity over other worldviews, and refute unbiblical ideas or theories. The goal of apologetics is to persuade belief by presenting a rational basis for Christianity, to defend the truth by answering questions or the objections of unbelief, and to reveal the foolishness of false ideas so they do not capture the heart and mind of our children.

Apologetics is an important aspect of your discipleship ministry to your grandchildren, and can be divided into the following four categories:

Prove. Develop a case for Christianity utilizing biblical, scientific, historical, archeological, and personal testimony to establish the truthfulness of the Christian worldview. Show that Christianity is true, credible, reliable, and aligns with the real world.

Defend. In every generation there are many attacks against Christianity, and children need to be introduced to these distorted ideas, learn to test them against God's Word, and be able to identify truth from error. The two primary areas of attack: The Son of God and the Word of God.

Refute. Compare and contrast with other religions and belief systems to verify the Christian faith and dismantle false and erroneous views. Refute arguments made in support of different beliefs by showing they are unreliable, irrational, unverifiable, or simply do not make sense with what we see in real life.

Persuade. Work to clarify biblical truths, answer objections, address criticisms, provide answers and eliminate any intellectual difficulties that stand in the way of coming to faith in Christ. The goal is to encourage alignment with God's Word, apply the truth of God's Word to life, and establish a lifelong

commitment to the Gospel. Apologetics is a partner of evangelism where we seek to convince children to accept truth claims about Christianity and trust Christ. Give your child every reason possible to embrace the Christian faith and reject counterfeit beliefs.

7 Tips to Help Grandchildren Understand and Defend Their Faith

- *Utilize questions to grow the faith of future generations.* Your goal is twofold: become an askable grandparent and become skilled at the art of asking good questions. Use questions to create serious spiritual dialogue, to encourage critical thinking, and discover what children believe.
- *Take objections from a grandchild seriously.* Do not mock an objection or dismiss a question. Spend as much time and energy as needed to fully explore a topic with a child.
- *Anticipate attacks and arguments that a grandchild will face in the teen and adult years.* After teaching a biblical truth to a grandchild, present the faulty argument, prove why it is false, give reading material that establishes the truth, and continue to point out in conversation over the years the erroneous arguments.
- *Built an apologetics library for each grandchild.* These make great gifts. Suggested books include *Cold-Case Christianity* by J. Warner Wallace, *Tactics* by Gregory Koukl, *Answers Vol. 1-4* by Answers in Genesis, *Quick Answers to Social Questions* by Bryan Osborne, *Demolishing Supposed Bible Contradictions* by Ken Ham, *Debunking Evolution* by Daniel Biddle, *True For You But Not For Me* by Paul Copan, and *The Case for Christ* by Lee Strobel.

- *Expose your grandchildren to the truth in real life experiences.* With the permission of parents, allow older grandchildren to see a live ultrasound so they learn the horrors of abortion, or visit the creation museum to teach the truth of creation and then visit a natural history museum to show the error of evolution.
- *Look for examples of false beliefs or erroneous messages in movies, music, books, and television.* Point them out, ask questions, and discuss why something is problematic. Always point back to Scripture so that it is not your opinion, but based on the authority of God's Word.
- *Utilize the Truth Method.* The truth method is intended to teach a biblical truth, identify a message from the world, and analyze it to determine the good and reject the bad using five steps.

1. Teach a biblical truth through instruction and discussion. What biblical truths do your grandchildren need to be taught to stand strong in their faith?
2. Recognize the idea or concept the world is communicating. What lies or half truths threaten their faith today?
3. Understand the claim by analyzing it. What is actually being said?
4. Test the idea according to the Bible. What does the Bible say about the topic?
5. Hold fast to what is good and reject what is bad. What should be rejected and why?

Rise up grandparents. The battle of ideas is real and it's taking no prisoners. We are in a battle for the hearts and minds of our grandchildren. Helping a grandchild detect errors and discern truth in the age of fake news, social media, and conspiracy theories is critical and you are uniquely positioned for such a time as this.

Tips for Dealing with Messy Family Holidays

Barb Howe

November 8, 2021

For grandparents whose families are affected by divorce, addiction, special needs, or dysfunctionality of any kind, holiday gatherings may look less like the Brady Bunch and more like the Adams Family. It might sometimes be tempting to ditch dinners with the kids in favor of a senior's vacation package. Let's face it, holiday get-togethers are complicated enough without adding layers of exes, in-laws, and unexpected friends of family members.

Some people seem to live in a perpetual state of crisis, as if they are trying to assemble a puzzle with pieces that don't belong together. While you cannot control how others behave, you can control how you respond. Instead of running away, try a more measured approach, especially when grandchildren are looking forward to special family celebrations.

As Christians, our calling is to demonstrate the love of Christ to those nearest to us. I find it helps to have a plan before dinner is in the oven or the clan is gathered at someone's home. Invite Jesus to be Lord over your family gatherings. Ask for his grace to flow out from you. Anticipating how you will react to challenging family dynamics can help reduce the stress of bringing everyone together.

Here are tips to help make family gatherings more fun for everyone, whether you are the host or a guest:

AS A HOST - *Expect the best, but prepare to be surprised.*

Set expectations.

A few weeks before a family gathering, communicate your plans with everyone on your invitation list. Let guests know the start and end time and ask if it works with other plans they may have. Adult children often have three or more invitations to holiday

gatherings. Include your adult children, but realize they may not be able to attend, may arrive late, or may need to leave early. Be gracious.

Know what triggers family arguments.

If verbal spats typically break out between the same two family members, take proactive steps to avoid confrontations. Seat people strategically at the dinner table to separate the ones most likely to get into arguments. If you're fortunate enough to have a peacekeeper among the guests, seat them somewhere in between and, if possible, give that person a heads-up to the situation.

An alternative solution is to not invite the troublemakers. Use your discretion and consider the family dynamics of this choice. Ask yourself if it will create more conflict or less if certain individuals are not present.

Stay flexible.

Hopefully, you have family members who are dependable guests. Plan seating for them with ample elbow room, but set aside an extra place setting or two in case an unreliable one shows up unannounced. It's a lot easier to pre plan an extra seating arrangement than ruin the atmosphere by scrambling to pull things together at the last minute.

I find keeping the menu simple and expandable makes it easier to accommodate unexpected guests. Get the basic menu down, and allow guests to bring side dishes, appetizers, or dessert. An alternative to a formal dinner is to set out trays of finger food, charcuterie trays, or similar fare and allow guests to serve themselves in a more casual setting. Plus, this method eliminates the disruption of late arrivals.

Understand that sometimes an adult family member's plans are changed at the last minute. Consider that they might be dealing with unreliable people who are disrupting their plans. This leads to the next suggestion.

Embrace new traditions.

I grew up as part of a large extended family with established holiday traditions and huge gatherings. Inevitably, as children grow, marry, and start their own families, traditions need to change to accommodate those dynamics. After years of stressing to set a Thanksgiving dinner akin to my childhood memories, I tried a simple menu of Cornish hens and roasted vegetables that reheats well, should there be any leftovers. This adaptation relieved the drudgery of an "everything you can think of" feast while creating an elegant dinner for the few guests that now grace my table. It has become our new family

tradition. I also roast a turkey ahead of time so my husband can enjoy his family tradition of eating leftover turkey sandwiches later in the evening or the following day.

AS A GUEST – Go with the flow and keep a positive attitude.

Have an emergency exit strategy.

When someone's behavior becomes unruly at an event, feel free to leave. Preplan an exit strategy where disruptions are likely, such as gatherings that descend into heavy drinking. When you arrive, tell the host you may need to leave early. I know someone who arranges for a friend to call or text at a certain time during family gatherings with a coded message. It gives them an option to leave without causing offense, or to simply let the friend know they are staying.

Anticipate the unexpected.

Recognize that family members who are challenged to think beyond “right now” are not going to be reliable hosts. Expect it and enjoy their positive traits. Some of the most delightful and warm-hearted people seem incapable of arriving at a place on time, or preparing to welcome guests at the planned start time. You cannot change them. Instead, just enjoy your time with them.

Be good to the hosts.

Show up on time, and don't come empty handed. Ask if you can bring a dish to share. Small hostess gifts are always welcome. Offer to help with preparations and clean ups. Leave on time.

“*God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

Romans 5:8

AT ALL TIMES - *Be the person others want to be around.*

Whether you are a host or a guest, make a point to introduce yourself to newcomers and get to know them. If possible, make accommodations for individuals who have special needs. These acts of consideration will help to create a more pleasant atmosphere for everyone to enjoy their time together.

During a season when families gather to celebrate, feel free to lavish your kindness on the ones who are closest to you. I often need to ask myself if the way I interact is honoring God. When I consider the patience my own family has shown to me during my youth, I am inclined to pay it forward to younger generations that are now going through similar experiences.

Remember there is someone more generous than any of us will ever be.

The Ripple Effect of Praying Grandparents

Lillian Penner
June 21, 2021

During the summer, many grandparents will vacation with their grandchildren. Some will go camping. It is an excellent opportunity to spend extra time with the possibility of quality interaction. Now imagine you are camping with your grandchildren in the mountains. You have cooked your campfire stew for dinner, and you are relaxing around the campfire beside a big lake. It is perfectly still; there is no wind. The lake is a mirror reflecting a beautiful sunset. Sticky-fingered grandchildren delight in s'mores while skipping stones across the lake's glassy surface. They are enthralled with the traveling waves seeing who can make the biggest ripples.

Grandpa tells Grandma, "Just as the kids are making ripples in the water with the rocks, we can make ripples in the lives of our grandchildren with our

prayers." So likewise, our prayers for our grandchildren to invite Jesus Christ into other lives and walk with Him throughout their lives will have a ripple effect on their families, friends, world, and future.

Another way we as grandparents can have a ripple effect on the lives of our grandchildren is by the way we live our lives. As we seek the Lord ourselves, investing time, energy, and effort in our spiritual walk with Him, our example will have a ripple effect on our children, grandchildren, and future generations.

My Great-grandfather's Prayer

I found a letter in my family archives written by my great-grandfather in Poland, addressed to my grandfather, who had immigrated to America. In the letter, he wrote that he was praying for my grandfather and his future generations. It was a special

blessing for me to see in writing that my great-grandfather prayed for me before I was born. His prayers had a ripple effect on my grandparents, parents, my life, children, grandchildren, and now my great-granddaughters.

You have the privilege to start the ripples in your family if you did not have a Christian heritage. Prayer is the greatest gift we can give our family. Material things are needed, but they are temporary. Our prayers will affect them for a lifetime.

Personal Reflection:

- Are you creating a ripple effect on your grandchildren and their parents?
- How can you have a ripple effect on the lives of your grandchildren?
- Are you praying for your future generations?
- Do you communicate with your grandchildren and their parents that you are praying for them?

This blog is taken from *Grandparenting with a Purpose, Effective Ways to Pray for your Grandchildren*, available on the website www.gdptpr.com. Lillian Penner is the Prayer Director for Christian Grandparenting Network.

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Prayer is the greatest gift we can give our family.

6 Practical Ideas for Grandparenting Teens

Deborah Haddix
August 9, 2021

The early years of grandparenting can be so much fun. Your grandchildren are little, playful, and so very cute. They crave interaction, following you everywhere and hanging on your every word.

Then before you know it, things are different. Busy with their own lives, they don't come around as often. Feeling "much too big for that," they no longer crawl up in your lap or shadow your every move. More guarded with their thoughts and emotions, they don't talk as openly as they once did.

The changes are normal. But knowing this does little to remove the confusion, discouragement, and frustration we sometimes feel as our adorable little grandchildren grow up to be teens.

In this strange, unsettling place, the easiest course of action is to throw up our hands and bow out.

But we must remember that the easy way out is not always best. In the case of grandparenting teens, bowing out is definitely not best. God calls us to disciple our grandchildren, something we cannot do without contact and connection. It may not be easy. It will take work. But nowhere in the Bible are we ever given a free pass on our duties simply because work is required.

So, let's roll up our sleeves and get ready to do the hard work necessary for building a close relationship with our teen grandchildren.



Ideas for Grandparenting Teens

1-Prepare Yourself

Begin this journey into your new phase of grandparenting by spending time in God's Word, searching out his instructions to grandparents (Deuteronomy 6:6-8; Psalm 78:1-8; Psalm 145:4-7; and others). Understand that our calling is to pass a legacy of faith to younger generations, which includes our teen grandchildren. Make the commitment both in prayer and in writing to honor that call – no matter how hard.

Then follow through on your commitment by creating various opportunities for the contact and connection that are vital to the health of your relationship.

2-Make Time

Created for connection, our grandkids are drawn to the places where they think their craving will be satisfied. Sadly, this means that many are settling for the poor

substitutes they find on social media – ones that often lead to anxiety, stress, identity issues, and so much more. The special time you make for your grandchildren lets them know they are of great value and helps build the strong, solid connections they need. Consider these ideas for connecting:

- One-on-one time – There is just something about one-on-one time. When parents and siblings are not present, a different dynamic exists that helps conversations flow and relationships grow.
- Watch a movie – Let your teenage grandchild choose the movie. It may not be something that you would usually watch but watch it anyway. Their choice will reveal so much about them to you. Next time, you choose. If possible, watch the movie in your home where you are free to talk as you watch. Movie theaters are not conducive to conversation but are a

valid option as you transition into this new phase of your relationship especially if you go for dessert afterward.

- Attend a sporting event, play, or concert – Be sure to consider your grandchild's interests before choosing. On the way home, stop for a bite to eat and discuss your evening.
- Go hiking, fishing, or sightseeing – Change up the scenery. Get them out of the house and away from the electronics.
- Share a hobby – Does your grandchild enjoy baseball, baking, or collecting coins? What hobbies do you enjoy? Grilling, gardening, painting? Gather the materials and enjoy a hobby together.
- Teach each other a new skill – My daughter shared with me that her teen girls taught her how to add another member to a FaceTime call so they could have a family discussion.

For the most part, teens know so much more about technology. Let them teach you. In return, offer to teach them how to sew or build a birdhouse.

- Attend school functions, sporting events, and music recitals – Be their biggest cheerleader.
- Browse old photo albums – Photos of them, their parents, and you when each was young can spark wonderful conversations.
- Eat – Take your grandchildren out to eat at their favorite restaurant or fix them their favorite home cooked meal.
- Volunteer together – Look for opportunities that interest you both – serving at a soup kitchen, helping at a youth camp, working in the audio-visual ministry at your church. Check with your church and neighborhood nonprofit groups to find something of common interest.

- Go on vacation – Invite your teen grandchild to your home or travel someplace together. If your finances allow, you might even want to consider instituting a family tradition where each grandchild gets to choose where you will vacation together when they celebrate a certain milestone such as a 16th birthday or graduation.

3-Ask Questions

A good question is one of the most powerful tools any grandparent can utilize. Asking questions of your grandchildren shows your interest in them and draws them into conversation. Your questions can help you learn so much about your grandchild's personality, daily life, struggles, and feelings. Even a reserved teen can be drawn out through the power of a great question.

So, what qualifies as a good question? Forget *yes* or *no* questions and anything that

requires a simple one-word response. These questions don't go very far in sparking conversation or building deep connections. And, absolutely, avoid questions spiked with sarcasm, laced with judgment, or meant to embarrass. Good questions are open-ended and require some thought in the answering. They invite your grandchild to share how they think and what they feel. As well, they create a space for honest answers.

4-Listen

Do an internet search for "how to listen well," and it will return a plethora of results – active listening, effective listening, *Listening for Heaven's Sake*. Sure, some great ideas are shared within each of these methods. But the bottom line when it comes to listening to your teen grandchild is to *just listen*:

Give them your full attention

– Put your phone away and remove all other distractions. Show them their importance by keeping your eyes on them while they speak.

Don't let your mind wander –

Keep your mind focused on what is being said rather than on how you will respond.

Don't judge –

If you are living an authentic life of faith before them, your grandchildren already know how you feel. Give them the freedom to talk without the worry of condemnation. Be their safe place.

Don't give advice –

Unless you are specifically asked, don't try to fix the problem or give advice. If you are asked for advice, keep your words short and to the point. And, this is so important: do not preach. They get enough of that from other adults in their lives. Instead, bathe both your grandchild and the problem in prayer.

5-Let Go of Expectations

We all have tightly held expectations of how things *should* be. The thing is, it's those pesky expectations that often cripple our relationships.

Did you know that one of the reasons teens stay away from some adults is that they don't feel they are living up to expectations?

Haircuts, hair color, piercings, tattoos, clothing styles, are they really that important? The truth is these are little things, and they will change with time. Learn to keep your mouth shut when it comes to the little things. Create a safe space for your grandchildren to share the big things, the ones that really matter.

What about those times when you truly believe that your grandchild is wrong? Keep it to yourself. As mentioned above, you share your beliefs with your grandchild through your authentic faith life. A living example of your faith is far more effective than a hundred lectures could ever be. Of course, this does not mean that you overlook and accept bad behavior. Establish house rules and apply them equally to all your grandchildren, including the teens.

And what about the expectation that your relationship with your teen grandchild will be the same as it was when they were young? Acknowledge it as unrealistic and let it go. The fact is, it's the nature of a teenager to do their own thing and grow their own identity as they spread their wings. Yes, they have other things vying for their thoughts and time, and they won't necessarily be around as much as they once were. It doesn't mean they no longer love you.

6-Ask for Help

Just as our grandchildren were made for connection, so were we. We were not meant to navigate these new waters alone. Think back. Were you surrounded by a bevy of friends when you walked down the aisle? Did you have the support of a MOPS group when preschoolers filled your home? Was there a trusted friend on speed-dial when your kids were teens?

Don't abandon God's design for community now. Gather a like-minded tribe that you can ask for help and find support. Join or start a Grandparents at Prayer group, connect with a Bible-based grandparenting group, either face-to-face or online, or make a pact with a trusted grandparent friend and get them on speed-dial. However you choose to surround yourself with help, don't be afraid to ask.

Contrary to what we may think as our teen grandchildren seem to pull away, they really do crave positive adult interaction. They may not be quick to show it. They may want it on their terms. But they do want it. It is up to us to do the work to make sure it happens.

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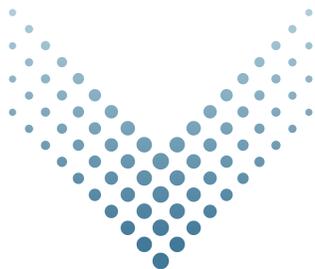
One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts.

Psalm 145:4

Triple-Decker Grandparents: Sandwiched Between Elderly Parents, Adult Children, and Grandchildren

Bev Phillips
March 15, 2021

In 1981, social worker Dorothy Miller originated the term “sandwich generation” to describe those who are working full time while simultaneously caring for their children and aging parents. This describes over half of people in their 40’s and 50’s in the United States. But a new term has emerged for those of us who are older adults wedged between advanced elderly parents, adult children, grandchildren, or even great-grandchildren: “triple-decker club sandwich”! One in three families today include four generations.



I have found it to be quite challenging to be a good spouse, parent, grandparent, and daughter as I fill so many familial roles. (And that doesn’t include being an employee, friend, church member, or community volunteer.) As a Christ-follower, I take seriously the assignment to “teach your children and their children” (Deuteronomy 4:9) about the Lord as well as the commandment to “honor your parents” (Deut 5:16; Ephesians 6:2) and to “care for those in your family” (I Timothy 5:8). Yet, the attempt to balance the multiple roles of nurturer, caregiver, mentor, historian, role model, and relational connector can sometimes feel like we’re being squeezed beyond our ability to cope. So let’s examine the layers of this triple-decker club sandwich.

Every sandwich begins with bread, and a triple-decker has an extra layer of it.

Who hasn’t been drawn into the kitchen by the tantalizing

smell of fresh baked bread? The basis of good bread is the yeast or leavening that produces a light texture as it spreads silently throughout the dough. This transforms the heavy lump of dough into something delightfully edible. Jesus is referred to as the "Bread of Life" (John 6:35) and the "Living Bread" (John 6:51). He even uses bread to represent His body which was broken for us at the Last Supper. In order to be a leavening influence in our relationships with family members of all ages, we will need to begin by allowing God's Holy Spirit to permeate all aspects of our daily life. He is the One who will transform us and them into the people He wants us to become. Without Him, the bread of our club sandwich will be heavy and inedible. May the way we live our daily lives and love our family draw them to Jesus and to us.

So what is the meat in our sandwich?

Meat can be tough or tender, difficult or easy to chew and swallow. How do we come across to our adult children (another new term: "chadult" is an adult whose parents are still living) or our elderly parents? Is it easy to have relationships with us? Or is time spent with us more like chewing on a tough piece of meat, trying to get through it and swallow it? Practice showing respect to your chadults, allowing them to be the parents of your grandchildren as you support, encourage, and speak well of them whenever possible. One of the best pieces of advice I've ever received regarding my chadults is "don't give advice unless it is first requested." Rather, look for ways to affirm and to be a good listener. Giving grace usually comes before speaking truth; let your actions precede your words.

Can you say “cheese”?

This word that we most frequently hear when a family photo is being taken is an essential ingredient for a club sandwich. Take lots of pictures of all those smiles. Not only are they good for scrapbooks but they represent fun. Without some lightheartedness, all families will suffer. The study of laughter and its effects on the body is called “gelotology.” Up to 15 facial muscles are used when a person laughs, and 10 minutes of belly-laughing exercises abdominal muscles as much as 30 minutes on a rowing machine (I definitely prefer laughing). Proverbs 17:22 tells us that “a merry heart is good medicine.” Laughing reduces blood pressure, decreases stress hormones, boosts the “feel good” brain endorphins, and promotes circulation. Having cross-generational fun together can decrease relational strain, promote stronger relationships, and build positive memories.

Some people enjoy onions in their club sandwich.

When I think of onions, tears come to mind. When dealing with four generations, there are many times when we encounter reasons for tears. Strained or broken relationships, deep disappointments, hurtful words, poor choices, illness, divorce, decline, and death may touch our families despite all our prayers, efforts, and good intentions. The tears shed may help to wash away doubts or fears, release pain, and express deep prayer even without words. We can model a humble heart with apologies or by seeking forgiveness when it applies to us. When it is out of our hands, we cover our loved ones with our love and prayers. And we can hold onto hope for the future as we count on God’s promise in Revelation 7:17 that “He will someday wipe every tear from our eyes.”

To ensure a vegetable content, most sandwiches include lettuce.

It may be surprising to know that lettuce is more than just a green crunchy ingredient; it contains vitamin A which is essential for good vision and eye health. I John 4:7 says “**let us** love one another, for love is from God.” Love is the lettuce in our family sandwich — the ingredient that is tender, delicate, and flavorful. The love which God provides through us to our grandchildren, our children, our spouses, and our elderly parents is essential to maintaining His vision and purpose for our daily lives as we love and serve them. Just as wilted lettuce makes a sandwich unappealing, our love for others needs to be kept fresh through time spent with God in His word in order for us to remain refreshed when we feel pulled in so many directions.

Triple decker club sandwiches are not all alike; they are as unique in their ingredients as are our family structures. Being part of this sandwich impacts our wallets, our time, our freedom, and our emotions when facing competing priorities. It is vital to not neglect your own needs as you seek to balance all these aspects: eat healthy, rest, laugh a lot, and seek help when it is needed.

But sandwiches are not just for looking at — they are made to be consumed. We eat them one bite at a time; each day, say, “I’m doing the best I can; what is Jesus’ assignment for me today?” Let us be thankful for ALL the ingredients. Leaning on Jesus for strength, wisdom, guidance, and comfort is essential to maintaining our balance. God has chosen us for this time, these situations, and these specific people. What a privilege and honor to serve Him in this way.

10 Simple Ideas for Bringing Bible Accounts Alive for Young Children

Deborah Haddix
April 26, 2021

A few years ago, I read an interesting book by Ken Ham and Britt Beemer titled *Already Gone*. It was written in response to study findings* that indicate our churches are losing their kids in elementary, middle school, and high school rather than in college.

Having spent many years as both a public school and Sunday school teacher, one point in the book jumped out at me as if in flashing neon lights.

When it comes to school-age children, the authors assert that several factors have led to a great disconnect between the Bible and “real” life. But the one that captured my attention was the use of one seemingly little word – the word *stories*.

According to Ham and Beemer, children in America today perceive that they learn the “real” stuff, the relevant stuff – geography, biology, anthropology, astronomy, history – in school. And that Sunday School is a place for hearing Bible *stories* – tales and narratives, that may or may not be “real”.

So how do we begin to reverse the disconnect?

I suggest, in agreement with the authors, that we begin by finding a better word than *stories*. Perhaps instead we teach Bible *history* or share “the *account* of Noah and the Ark or Joshua and the Battle of Jericho”. Our wording alone can do a great deal in helping our grandchildren better understand that what is in the Bible is “real” history.

Another thing we grandparents can do is share the Bible with our grandchildren. Children’s Bibles and Bible-based books

are wonderful supplemental resources, but our grandchildren need us to share the full counsel of God's Word with them. You might be saying, "But my grandchildren are so young, and the Bible text can be so difficult." Don't let that stop you. There are many ways to engage young minds and bodies with Scripture. Consider the following:

Involve Your Grandchildren as Cast Members

Turn your living room or back patio into a theater and assume the role of narrator. Before you begin reading a chosen Bible narrative with your grandchildren, let each child assume the role of one of the characters they will be hearing about. Encourage them to act out the storyline as you read. (If you have more parts than grandchildren, let each play multiple roles or grab some stuffed animals to fill in the need.)

Commission Them as Artists

There are many passages of Scripture that are story driven. When you get to these, take the opportunity to activate your grandchildren's imaginations. Give them a sheet of paper and a pencil or some crayons and ask them to draw what they hear as you read. The act of drawing will engage your grandchildren with the text as it is being read. Additionally, the completed drawings will become a reference guide. They will help your grandchildren remember the people of the Bible and their stories, help you make connections for your grandchildren as you read on, and create opportunities for you to incorporate the Gospel into what your grandchildren have seen and drawn.

“The Bible is God's gift to all – to you, to your children, to your grandchildren.”

Create a Mural

Involve your entire family in making art. Locate some poster board or butcher paper and as a family – grandchildren, their parents, and you – work together to create a mural of the passage being read. Feed the imaginations of your grandchildren by including adults in the process.

Turn the Bible Passage into a Research Project

Passages about constructing the tabernacle (Exodus), building the temple (1 Kings), and others of similar nature are often the ones we skip over when reading the Bible with our grandchildren. After all, these passages are what cause even grown adults to abandon yearly reading plans. When you get to Bible accounts of this nature, increase your grandchildren's interest by looking things up. A new furnishing for the tabernacle? An article of priestly clothing? The layout of the temple? Google it or look it

up in a reference book. Add to your grandchild's view of the passage by providing visuals as seen through the eyes of an artist.

Shout "Amen"

Genealogies can be tough. All those names – one after another after another – of names we're not even sure how to pronounce. Adults skirt around them. Surely, young children won't get anything from them. Help your grandchildren engage with these passages of genealogy and draw their interest by asking them to shout "Amen" each time they hear a name they are familiar with in the very long list you will be reading.

"Jesus ("AMEN"), when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph ("AMEN"), the son of Heli, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi ("AMEN"), the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph ("AMEN"), the son of Mattathias,

the son of Amos ("AMEN"), the son of Nahum ("AMEN"), the son of Esli, the son of Naggai." - Luke 3:23-25 [{"AMEN"} added for example.]

Play "Banker"

Another idea for engaging with passages of genealogy is to let your grandchildren be the "banker" as you read. Before embarking on your reading of a lengthy genealogy, fill a large container with beads. Then provide each of your grandchildren with their own smaller container or cup. Instruct them to take a bead out of the larger container and put it into their own cup every time a person's name is read. When you come to the end of the genealogy, count how many beads are in each cup.

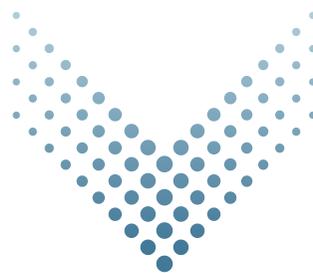
Write Songs

Prior to reading the day's Bible text together, challenge your grandchildren to listen for thoughts or phrases that would be a great song title. When you finish reading your passage, share your song

titles. Add to the fun by writing your own hymn or worship song to go along with your titles. Bonus points for verses or phrases that come from your reading passage.

Pray the Scripture

Many passages in the Bible are prayers, but we are not limited to these when it comes to praying Scripture. Any portion of Scripture can be prayed. Model the praying of Scripture for your grandchildren as part of your Bible reading. Demonstrate how to read the Bible text word-for-word as a prayer by reading slowly, thoughtfully, and reflectively. Show them how to personalize Scripture prayers by substituting your own name for pronouns as you read. After some modeling experiences, allow your grandchildren to take turns praying the Scripture for themselves.



Encourage Retelling

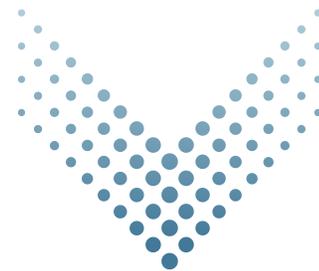
After you have finished reading a passage and before closing your Bible, ask your grandchild to retell the passage in their own words. This is a wonderful way for you to ascertain what they grasped from the reading and where you may need to make some clarifications. Let your grandchild know ahead of time that they will be asked to retell the passage. This will help them be more engaged with the text and listen with purpose.

Let Them Wiggle

Young children are made to wiggle and move, not for sitting long stretches at a time. Take advantage of some of the wonderful Scripture music that is available today by playing a musical version of your passage either before or after you read. As the music plays, encourage your grandchildren to get up and move. Two of my favorites for kids' Scripture music are Seeds Family Worship and The Rizers. Both can be accessed with no charge on YouTube.

The Bible is God's gift to all – to you, to your children, to your grandchildren – and all that lies within its pages is “real”. Begin now to get your grandchildren into the history and accounts that point directly to Him.

**Among the studies mentioned in the book were ones conducted by Barna, LifeWay, and America's Research Group (commissioned by Answers in Genesis).*



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