

Victorious Family:

The Road to Victory Begins at Home



“This is a decisive moment in our nation’s history. It is an opportunity to rewrite our narrative, from one of decay to one of restoration, from moral ambiguity to a resurgence of faith and character. It’s a summons to fortify our societal foundation by fortifying the family.”

—Dr. Terence Chatmon, Founder and CEO of Victorious Family

VICTORIOUS FAMILY

Victorious Family: The Road to Victory Begins at Home is a Special Section published in collaboration with Victorious Family, an international family-discipleship nonprofit headquartered in Alpharetta, Georgia, The Washington Times Advertising and Marketing Department and the Times Global Media Group (TGMG).

Rekindling the moral torch:	3	Strengthening homes	15
The crucial role of family-centered faith in today’s society		Joshua and Renesha Hodges, Jason and Rachel Brubaker,	
By Terence Chatmon		Tony and Qualahnia Randall	
Tax credit bill, other reforms can	4	The 5 love languages of children:	16
empower families and reverse cultural decline		The secret to loving children effectively	
By U.S. Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith		By Gary Chapman	
Congress must reduce child poverty and	5	In work and family,	18
strengthen families to help children thrive		the Bible has transformative power	
By U.S. Rep. Danny K. Davis		By Steve Green	
Building a culture of generosity in your family	6	The media-wise family	20
Why we gain most when we give away		A blueprint to raising godly children	
By Nick Lacy		By Ted Baehr	
What does discipling a child look like?	8	Victorious Family’s Research and Equipping	21
Getting parental priorities right		Family Discipleship Institute empowers futures	
By George Barna		By Victorious Family	
As for me and my house	9	Nehemiah Institute	22
How faith-filled families will forge our future		By Daniel Smithwick	
By Benjamin Watson		Christian Education Initiative	22
Trust fuels life and family	10	By Kevin L. Clauson	
By Henry Cloud		Foundation for American Christian Education	23
Sowing the seeds for America’s	12	By Carey Woodruff	
‘complete spiritual turnaround’		The pursuit of healthy family rhythms	24
By Len Munsil		By Jeff Norris	
Reviving family as ‘the foundational	13	Experiencing God in the family	25
social institution created and ordained by God’		By Richard Blackaby	
By Tracy Munsil		An open letter to families of faith	26
Equipping Parents	14	By Christopher Dolan	
Kenyon and Beth Akers, Louis and Sommer Vega,			
Kimani and Molly Mustafa, Harrison and Taren			

Cover art by Heir Apparent Design



SPECIAL SECTIONS

Tony Hill
DIRECTOR OF ADVERTISING
& INTEGRATED SALES

Advertising Department:
202-636-3027

Thomas P. McDevitt
CHAIRMAN

Christopher Dolan
PRESIDENT &
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Adam VerCammen
SR. DIRECTOR, DIGITAL STRATEGY
& AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

Lea Anne Foster
SPECIAL SECTIONS EDITOR

Patrick Crofoot
GRAPHICS SUPERVISOR

Special Sections are multipage tabloid products that run in The Washington Times daily newspaper and are posted online and in PDF form on its website. Sponsors and advertisers collaborate with The Times’ advertising and marketing departments to highlight a variety of issues and events. Unless otherwise identified, Special Sections are prepared separately and without involvement from the Times’ newsroom and editorial staff.

Rekindling the moral torch: The crucial role of family-centered faith in today's society



By Terence Chatmon

In the tumult of modernity, uncertainty and wars, as societal structures shift and values evolve, one steadfast foundation remains often overlooked—the family.

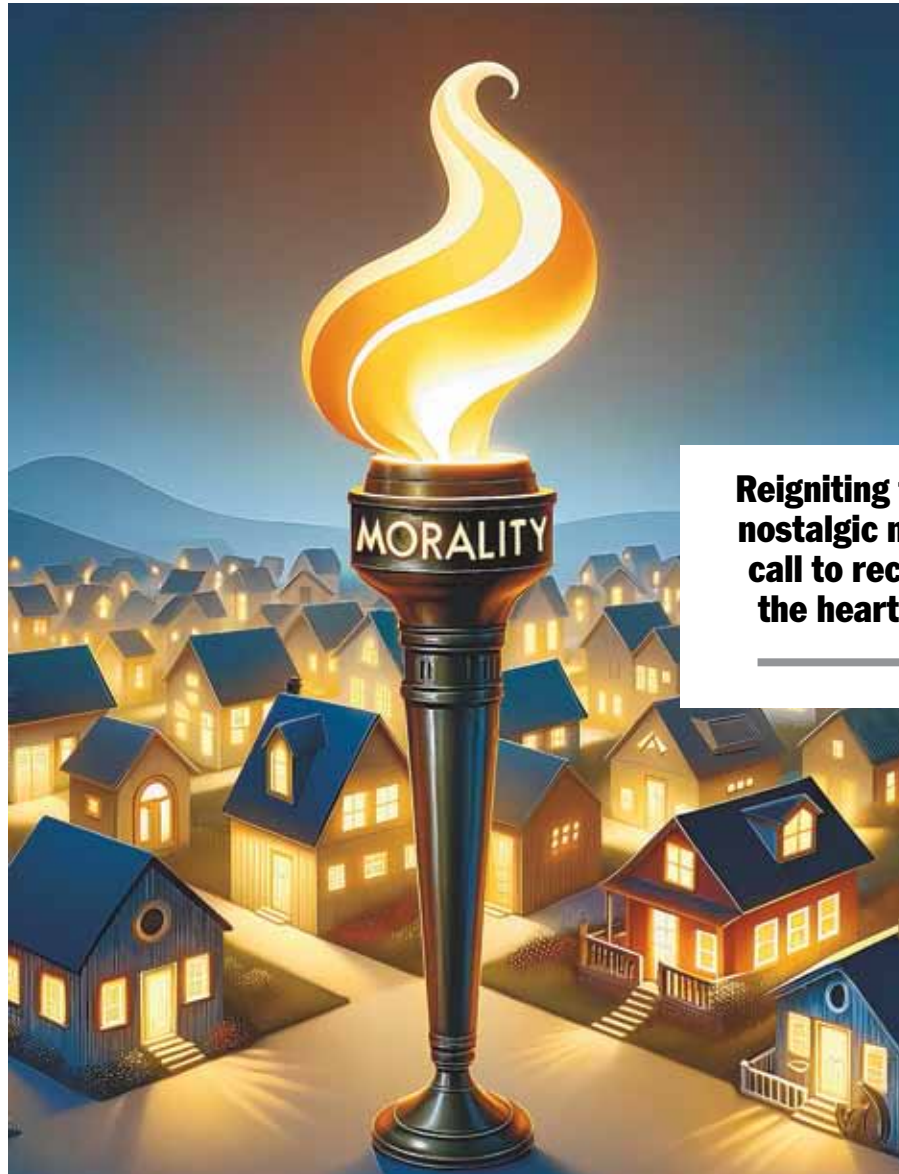
Families, these sanctuaries of love and learning, have weathered the rise and fall of civilizations. They stand as the bedrock upon which our societal foundation is erected. Yet, in the commotion of progress and change, the nurturing of faith within the family has been inadvertently sidelined.

Our society finds itself at a crucial crossroads, grappling with the repercussions of prolonged moral erosion. The repercussions echo through broken homes and fragmented families, painting a sad picture of societal disarray. It's not merely a statistical trend but a poignant testament to the unraveling of our communal fabric.

The sanctity and strength of the family cannot be overstated. Within these walls, the future is nurtured, and the torch of faith is passed on. It's not merely about shelter and sustenance; it's about instilling our children with values that will guide their actions and shape their character.

Reigniting family-centered faith isn't a nostalgic nod to the past but a clarion call to reclaim what has always been the heartbeat of resilient societies. This isn't about halting progress but rather anchoring it in timeless values, providing a moral compass to navigate the waves of change.

The restoration of family-centered faith is not a task for families alone but a societal obligation. It necessitates a shift in focus, from external quandaries to internal spiritual nurturing. It's about empowering parents to become the spiritual architects of our future, shaping a generation grounded in enduring values. Said another way... equipping a



HEIR APPARENT DESIGN

character, igniting a beacon of hope and resilience for generations to come.

In the pursuit of reviving family-centered faith, Victorious Family emerges as a guiding light. Through their multifaceted resources, educational programs, and community engagement initiatives, they not only present a solution but also stand as an exemplar of practical implementation. Their emphasis on intentional family discipleship echoes the call for equipping families to become the cradle of enduring values.

Reigniting family-centered faith isn't a nostalgic nod to the past but a clarion call to reclaim what has always been the heartbeat of resilient societies.

The future of our society hinges on the resurrection of family-centered faith, and Victorious Family stands as a beacon, illuminating the path forward. Their commitment to empowering parents, fostering family discipleship, and advocating intentional parenting resonates deeply within the framework of societal resurgence. Victorious Family isn't just an organization; it's a movement—an advocate for the revival of family-centered faith, a catalyst for societal transformation.

Join the movement and take the next step in family transformation—collaborate with Victorious Family as it paves the way for a future where families are fortified, values endure, and society stands resilient. Get our Free Newsletter. Become a Master Family Champion. Host a family Discipleship Workshop in your Church. Start at home with our Family Discipleship HomeKit.

Plant the Seed, Plant the Plan, Plant the Word.

.....
Dr. Terence Chatmon is the founder and CEO of Victorious Family, a nonprofit dedicated to a global family discipleship movement. Headquartered in Alpharetta, Georgia, Victorious Family's mission is to "Equip and Empower a generation of parents to reach a generation of parents." He is the author of a 5-Star Bestseller "Do Your Children Believe?: Becoming Intentional About Your Family's Faith and Spiritual Legacy." His family discipleship workshop, Charting Your Family's Spiritual Course, has reached families and faith-based leaders on five continents and continues to grow. Learn more about Victorious Family and Dr. Chatmon at www.victoriousfamily.org.

generation to reach a generation.

Reviving true Christianity, rooted in spiritual transformation and discipleship, is pivotal. The church's role transcends mere social issues; it's about fostering spiritual growth within its congregation, emboldening families to be the sanctuaries of faith and character.

The revival of family-centered faith demands deliberate action. It calls for the implementation of intentional family discipleship programs, empowering and guiding parents to navigate the intricacies of nurturing faith within their homes. It requires a shift from merely identifying issues to fostering lasting solutions rooted in spiritual growth.

This is a decisive moment in our nation's history. It is an opportunity to rewrite our narrative, from one of decay to one of restoration, from moral ambiguity to a resurgence of faith and character. It's a summons to fortify our societal foundation by fortifying the family.

Our legacy and societal resilience lie in the sanctity of our families. It's time to return to our roots, to strengthen the family as the guardian of enduring values for future generations. This is an achievable reality, waiting to be realized through concerted, purposeful endeavors.

It starts at home, within the intimate confines of each family. It starts with each one of us, embracing the responsibility of nurturing faith and character within our households. The revival of our society, one family at a time, is within our grasp.

As we embark on this journey, we need to harness the collective strength of our communities, institutions, and individuals. It's a collaborative endeavor, an investment in the future of our society.

Let's embark on this transformative journey, where the family once again becomes the crucible of faith and



Tax credit bill, other reforms can empower families and reverse cultural decline



**By U.S. Senator
Cindy Hyde-Smith**

Growing up in a wholesome, Christian home in the town of Monticello in Lawrence County, Mississippi, I am so grateful I had the chance to learn many lessons from my wonderful, hardworking, salt-of-the-earth parents. Together, they taught me the value of prayer and hard work.

My family had a big garden every year, and one of my mother's favorite sayings was "I'm not raising peas. I'm raising children." And so we had to rise at daylight and pick those peas before we could do anything else!

My family was critical to forming who I am today, and for the same reason families everywhere are the foundation of America, or indeed any society.

Families instill the values of virtues and self-government, which are essential

to maintain the American Republic. Common sense and decades of social science research confirm the essential truths that children need mothers and fathers, that marriage matters, and that children raised in intact families are more likely to thrive.

because parents love their children and know their best interests. Parents should have control over their children's education, and education dollars should be allocated in a way that respects parent's values and their children's needs.

It is critical for lawmakers, churches and civil society to promote marriage and family, and reverse these disturbing trends.

Today, however, falling birth rates and marriages in decline have greatly weakened the American family. Added stress is placed on families by the insertion of radical ideologies into children's education and in the communities where they live. Permissive liberal approaches to societal problems, like crime, are ensnaring too many young people.

Meanwhile, many parents struggle to find work or maintain their standard of living as inflation and rising interest rates caused by the Democrats' reckless spending have left them struggling to afford groceries or a home for their families.

Government has a role in promoting marriage. Yet sadly, for too long, flawed government policies have exacerbated the decline of the American family, infringed on parental rights in education, and entrapped many in a cycle of poverty and dependency on government. It is critical for lawmakers, churches and civil society to promote marriage and family, and reverse these disturbing trends.

Children belong to their parents. They, not the government, are their primary educators and decisionmakers

The Biden administration chose to demonize parents who spoke out at local school board meetings opposing COVID-19 mandates or demanding the removal of pornographic and sexually explicit materials from school libraries. Instead of protecting the innocence of young children and the rights of parents, the Biden administration has doubled down on inserting radical gender ideology into schools, and twisted Title IX to force schools to allow boys in girls locker rooms and to compete in girls' sports.

To counter the Biden administration's anti-family policies, we must do more to support and foster family formation. This has taken on increased importance in light of the Dobbs decision that rightfully returned the power to protect unborn children to the peoples' elected representatives. I am proud to join Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida in sponsoring the Providing for Life Act. This pro-life and pro-family package provides comprehensive support for pregnant mothers and their families to empower them to choose life for their babies.

Critically, the Providing for Life Act

seeks to deliver tax relief to American families by greatly increasing the Child Tax Credit from \$2,000 to up to \$4,500 per child for children under the age of 6 — including unborn children — and up to \$3,500 for children under the age of 18.

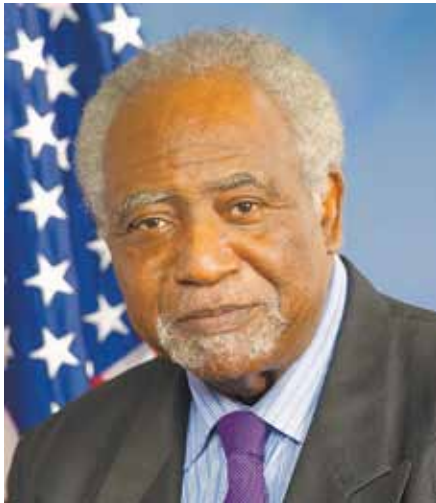
The bill would also expand tax relief for adoptive parents, support moms and children through child support reform (including during pregnancy), and provide more resources for lifting local communities through faith-based organizations. Lastly, the package would give new parents the option of obtaining paid parental leave, without adding to the deficit, by accessing up to three months of their Social Security benefits early.

American families deserve better than progressive Democrats' policies that undermine the family, insert radical ideology in schools, and promote dependency on government rather than helping families succeed and flourish.

I am proud to support reforms that put the interests of families back at the beating heart of our nation's economic and political life, and as the cornerstone of conservative policy reforms. By uplifting American families, promoting marriage, and reversing the Democrats' harmful policies that have weakened families, we will restore and strengthen the promise of the American dream for generations to come.

.....
Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith, Mississippi Republican, chairs the Senate Pro-Life Caucus and serves on the Senate Committee on Appropriation; Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry; Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; and Committee on Rules and Administration.

Congress must reduce child poverty and strengthen families to help children thrive



By U.S. Rep. Danny K. Davis

Child poverty is a moral emergency. Poverty exacts tremendous suffering from our youngest citizens — causing massive gaps in cognitive learning, increasing risks of hunger and homelessness, and raising the likelihood of lower lifetime earnings and poverty as an adult.

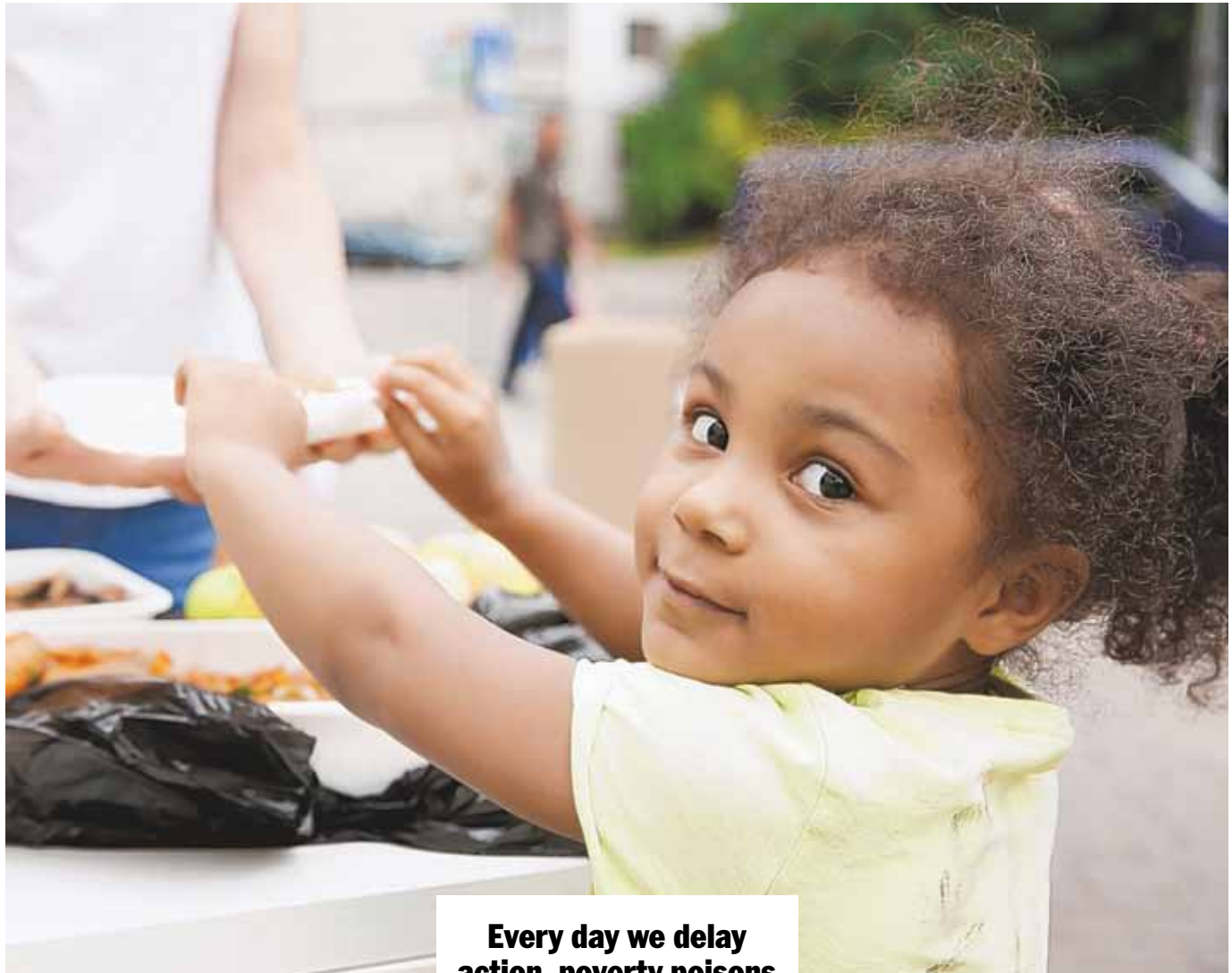
Due to strong federal investment by Democrats and President Biden — especially the expanded Child Tax Credit — child poverty precipitously dropped by almost half between 2020 and 2021 — the lowest rate on record. In my home state of Illinois, child poverty plunged by 51% in 2021. We know that this record drop in child poverty reached the Black, brown, and rural children who are disproportionately likely to be poor.

Alarming, just one year after the Republican-led expiration of these poverty-lowering investments in workers and families, the child poverty rate more than doubled, causing the biggest one-year increase in poverty we've ever seen. This doubling of child poverty mirrors the wide array of other indicators of the hardships that families experience — food insecurity, hunger, housing instability, homelessness, debt, or having the heat turned off.

The progress Democrats made in 2021 shows that we can slash child poverty when we have the political will to act. Congress should take immediate action to eliminate child poverty and reduce adversity for poor children by providing stability and support to their families.

Families need stability before parents can be reliable workers, and reliable workers need quality jobs to escape poverty. The Republican inaction to address child poverty leaves children suffering and weakens our nation.

We should restore the Child Tax



Every day we delay action, poverty poisons the future for millions of our children and for our nation.

Credit this year to give families quick relief. We should use every tool in our toolbox to address the child care crisis — direct assistance to parents and child care providers, guaranteed assistance to states, and modernization of the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit back to 2021 where families could receive up to \$8,000 in credit per year for their real child care costs — much better than the current maximum of \$2,100. A recent study by the National Academy of Sciences is clear that a robust Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit reduces child poverty and increases parental employment and earnings — especially for African Americans, single parents, and mothers younger than 25.

We also should promote housing security so that workers and families have the stability needed for success — including via direct assistance, tax incentives to build affordable housing, and tax credits to help cost-burdened renters. Further, we should enact comprehensive paid family and medical leave, policies that our peer countries have demonstrated substantially increase workforce

participation among women. Keeping parents connected to the workforce powers both family economic well-being and our national economic growth; each one percent increase in the overall workforce increases our national income by about \$180 billion.

We should restore the evidence-based, career-pathway Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG) program that Republicans refused to extend. HPOG improves educational opportunities for struggling workers so that they can access high-caliber, good-paying jobs. Workers need child care, a safe place to live, food to eat, reliable transportation, good education, and health care. If we want to support work, that's where we need to start.

Every day we delay action, poverty poisons the future for millions of our children and for our nation.

Democrats stand ready to set an aggressive child poverty reduction target and hold ourselves accountable to restore income supports to strengthen families and cut child poverty. Every American relies on the federal government for help sometimes. These investments benefit us all. They make us the country we want to be, lifting the burdens from vulnerable families so that children can thrive.

.....
Rep. Danny K. Davis, Illinois Democrat, has represented the 7th Congressional District of Illinois since 1997. He serves on the House Committee on Ways and Means and is the Ranking Member of the Worker and Family Support Subcommittee. Rep. Davis co-leads the Congressional Caucus on Ethnic and Religious Freedom in Sri Lanka, Community Health Center Caucus, Predominantly Black Institutions Caucus, and Trauma Informed Care Caucus, and is a member of several additional Congressional Caucuses including the Congressional Black Caucus, the Progressive Caucus, the Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth, and the Second Chance Task Force.

Building a culture of generosity in your family

Why we gain most when we give away



By Nick Lacy

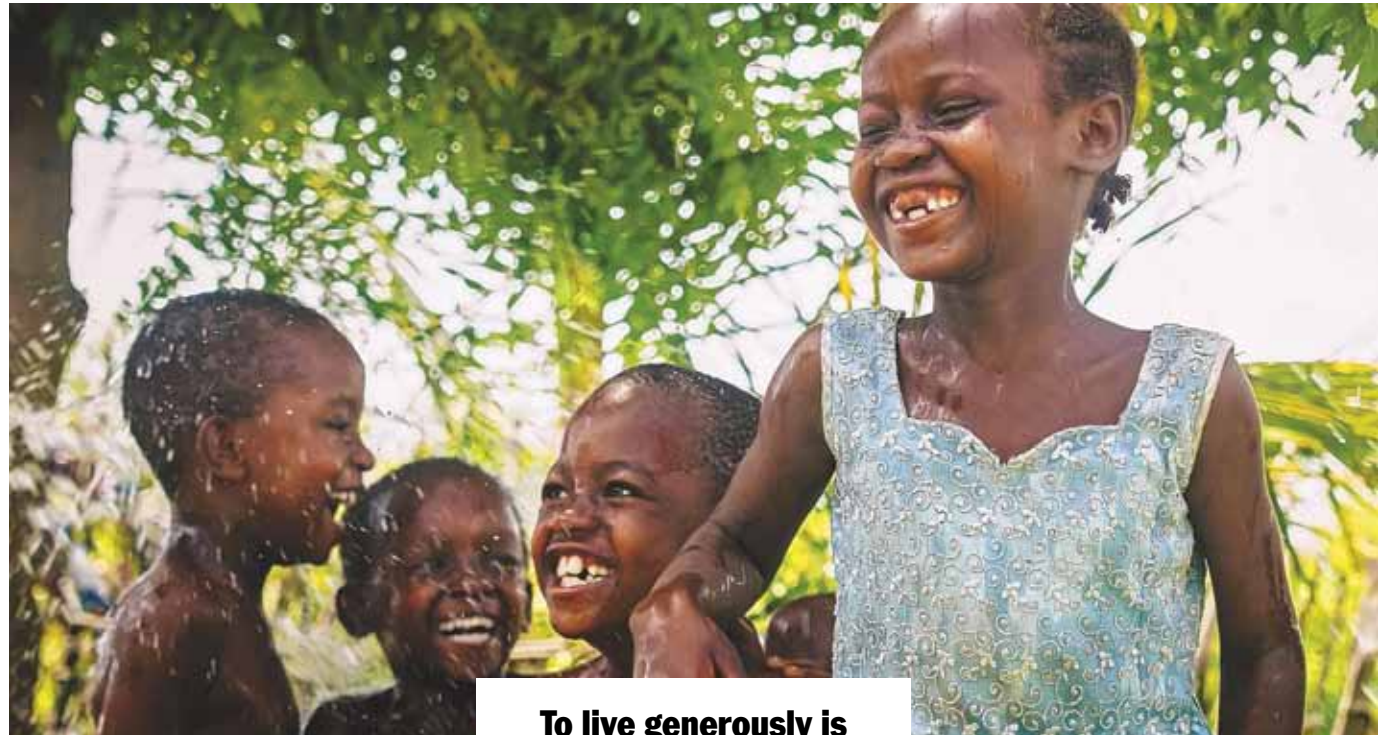
When was the last time you reflected on the culture of your family? Imagine if a reporter were to stay in your home for one week and write a story about your family, what would they say? What would be the terms they use to describe your priorities, actions, and attitudes? We have all had good and bad weeks in our homes, but what are the values that guide your family regardless of circumstances? Values such as unconditional love, honesty, and faith are certainly the cornerstones of a strong family unit. However, in today's increasingly individualistic society, there is one value that yields lasting return...generosity. Here's why.

Generosity Adds Meaning and Joy

To live generously is to live in sync with our God-given design. We were made in God's image and one of His most defining characteristics is generosity. God gave us the most extravagant gift ever. He gave us His Son and, through Him, offers the free gift of salvation to all.

This is why living generously makes life meaningful and joyful. As Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Just in case we need any convincing about that, countless secular studies back it up.

For example, in the book, "Happy Money", professors Elizabeth Dunn of the University of British Columbia and Michael Norton of Harvard, describe a study in which the spending habits of hundreds of Americans were analyzed. The study found that how much money individuals devoted to themselves was unrelated to their overall happiness. What did predict happiness was the amount of money they gave away. "The more they invested in others," the authors concluded, "the happier they were."



To live generously is to live in sync with our God-given design.

At Christian Community Credit Union, we have proudly given over \$6 million to various Christian charities, going as far as offering a credit card that automatically gives to these charities with each use. As a result, we have seen and experienced returns that far exceed any stock market, because it is impacting lives in a positive way for eternity. Nothing could match the joy that truth brings.

Generosity Deepens Your Family's Relationship with Christ

The Bible says, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21). In other words, our heart follows our money. Invest in a particular stock and you will probably find yourself checking on it frequently. Your time, attention, and heart are devoted to where you've invested some of your treasure.

Giving toward Christ-centered causes directs our hearts toward Him. As in his book "True Riches," John Cortines writes, "I never cared much about children trapped in poverty, until I began giving to Compassion International. Slowly, over time, I began to ache for every child in need to be fed, educated, and taught about Jesus."

Cortines says we shouldn't wait until we care deeply about certain causes before giving. Instead, we should give to causes because God cares deeply about them. Our care will follow as we increasingly see the world through God's eyes. When generosity becomes part of your family culture, you are equipping your children with the cares and heart of God.

Generosity is Contagious

If you have children (or grandchildren), your role-modeling in this area of generosity is likely to shape their generosity as well. In fact, a study by Fidelity Charitable found that of parents who give to charitable organizations, more than three-quarters (81%) of their children have participated in giving activities within the last year.

If we want the best for our children, some of the greatest gifts we can give them are an "others-centered" outlook and the habit of living generously. The best way we can do that is to model such a life. As has been said before about teaching our children, more will be caught than taught.

The world is a very uncertain and unpredictable place. But this much is guaranteed: A life lived generously will generate great returns.

Next Steps

Consider doing the following with your family:

1. Assess Your Values: Discuss what values you feel guide your family. Listen to what terms your kids, relatives, and loved ones use to describe what they feel is important to your family.
2. Decide to Be a Generous Family: Values are intentional, repeated, and celebrated. As a result, decide that generosity will be one of your family's core values. Write this value somewhere

where it can be visible along with your other stated values.

3. Take Action: Find an immediate action your family can experience together that shows the value of generosity and do it on a regular basis. For example, each month provide a meal to a family going through a rough time, create a family donation to a particular cause each month, volunteer at your church, etc.

Christian Community Credit Union (www.mycccu.com) is proud to offer quality banking products and solutions that have generosity embedded into them. CCCU invites you to take a moment and see if one of their products might be a great way to bring that value to your family. Regardless of what you choose, may we all strive to have generous families. By doing so, you will experience greater joy, a deeper relationship with Christ, and it will leave a lasting legacy for generations to come.

Nick Lacy is the AVP of Marketing and Analysis at Christian Community Credit Union (CCCU) where he oversees market research, analysis, and strategy. His background includes over 15 years of pastoral and executive ministry experience, former vice president of corporate strategy for a technology company, and a strategic and creative communications consultant. He has also been a featured expert on the topic of strategic execution in various publications, and holds a Masters degree in Ministry Management from Azusa Pacific University.

Bank with Your Christian Values!



Christian Community Credit Union (CCCU) is America's largest biblical banking solution whose **mission is to serve Christ followers to live and give more abundantly**. Watch your money grow with our **high-yield Welcome CDs**, while your funds are used to finance church growth and ministry expansion for Kingdom impact.

WELCOME CDs

UP TO **5.25%** APY*

- 7 and 14-month options
- \$500 minimum
- \$250,000 maximum per member
- New money only[‡]

Maximize your funds with this great rate, while you help advance God's Kingdom!



SCAN THE QR CODE TO GET STARTED & APPLY!

myCCCU.com/apply | 800.347.CCCU (2228)



*APY= Annual Percentage Yield. \$500 minimum; \$250,000 maximum. Annual Percentage Yield assumes that dividends remain in the account until maturity. A withdrawal will reduce earnings. No additional deposits can be made during the term of the Share Certificate of Deposit (CD). Rates, terms and conditions are solely within the discretion of the Board of Directors. We may limit the amount you may invest in one or more accounts to a total of \$1,000,000. Rates, terms, and conditions effective 11/28/23 and are subject to change without notice.

[‡]New money is money that is not presently on deposit at Christian Community Credit Union. Any monies deposited less than 30 days at CCCU will also be considered new money. The Credit Union reserves the right to make the sole judgment as to whether or not the deposited funds are considered new money.



Each account is insured up to \$250,000. By members' choice, this institution is not federally insured.

What does discipling a child look like? Getting parental priorities right



By George Barna

Most Americans rightfully lament the state of childhood in our country today. About three out of every four parents of young children believe their offspring will not be better off than they are.

What does being “better off” mean to parents? One measure is by examining what parents consider to be important for their youngsters.

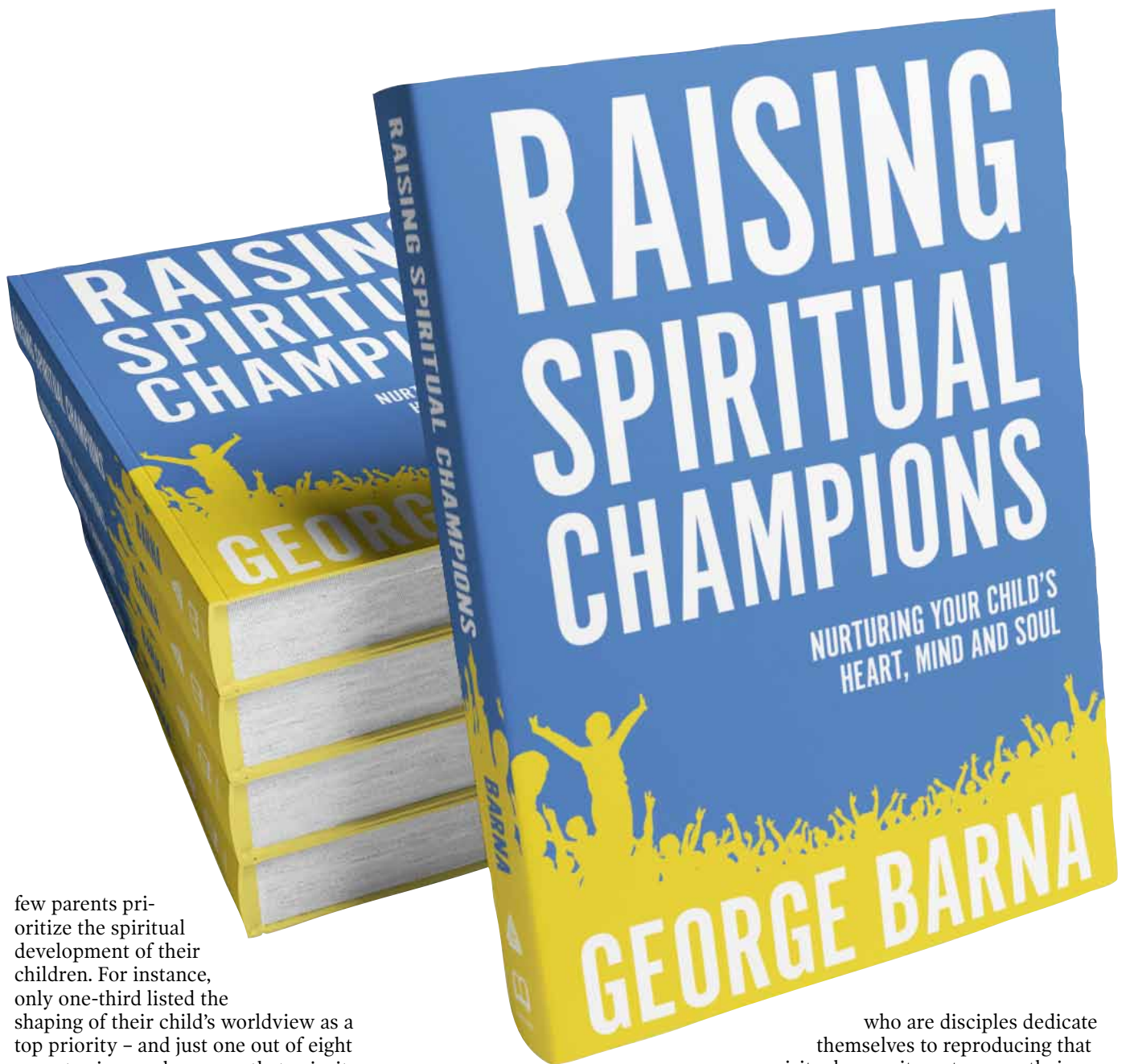
My research for the book “Raising Spiritual Champions” reveals the four major emphases of parents to set up their children for the good life. The top four priorities listed are academic performance, good health, happiness, and extracurricular achievements.

Another significant group that influences children – Christian pastors to children – are also concerned about the future for children. Yet they offer a somewhat different set of priorities for the children they minister to at their church: safety, meeting good friends, exposure to religious teaching, and the child’s happiness (also sometimes described as fun or enjoyment).

Interestingly, the children themselves have a very different focus – a much more basic outlook. Adolescents are more concerned about answering critical questions that will shape their life. Where did I really come from? What is my purpose? How can I be a success? What kind of lifestyle should I lead? What are the crucial boundaries for me to know and accept? In essence, children are struggling with the foundations of their worldview, which we learned is fully developed by age 13.

Notice that parental priorities are performance-driven; pastor’s priorities are program-oriented; and children’s priorities emphasize spiritual insight.

According to the research, relatively



few parents prioritize the spiritual development of their children. For instance, only one-third listed the shaping of their child’s worldview as a top priority – and just one out of eight parents vigorously pursue that priority for their children.

In contrast, both the Bible and adolescents elevate spiritual development to the top of the priority ladder. The Bible indicates that it is primarily the responsibility of parents to ensure the proper spiritual development of their children (Deuteronomy 6:1-9, Psalms 78:4-8, Proverbs 1:8). Success is described as helping their children to become disciples of Jesus Christ.

Alarming, most American parents are moving down a different path. Less than one out of every five parents identifies discipling their child as a top priority in their parenting adventure.

What does discipling a child look like? Jesus listed six requirements for anyone who wants to be His follower. Those characteristics are: intensely and robustly loving God (Luke 14:26), submitting to God’s authority (Luke 14:27), surrendering everything to the

According to the research, relatively few parents prioritize the spiritual development of their children.

cause of Christ (Luke 14:33), obeying Jesus’ teachings (John 8:31), loving other disciples (John 13:35) and producing spiritual fruit (John 15:8).

My research suggests that only about 3% of adults in America conform to that definition of a disciple. Because we know that it is existing disciples who develop future disciples, it is vitally important that parents

who are disciples dedicate themselves to reproducing that spiritual commitment among their own children. For parents who are religious but fail to meet the discipleship criteria, it is recommended they go on that journey to wholeness alongside their children. A great starting place is by exploring the seven cornerstones of a biblical worldview, also described in “Raising Spiritual Champions.”

Truly, the future of our nation, as well as the Christian churches in it, depends on whether we choose to raise our children to be passionate followers of Jesus Christ. Parents have the chief responsibility to direct and guide them down that path.

.....
George Barna, Ph.D., is the author of 60 books, including “Raising Spiritual Champions.” He serves as a Professor at Arizona Christian University; Director of Research at the Cultural Research Center at ACU; and Senior Research Fellow at Family Research Council.



As for me and my house

How faith-filled families will forge our future

By Benjamin Watson

The home is the world's oldest and most vital institution. Civilization's other two great institutions, the church and the government, find their roots in the nurturing influence and subsequent trajectory of its members. Without strong families raising tomorrow's confident and capable leaders, a nation will suffer internally and become increasingly vulnerable to outside threats.

Collectively, we have a vested interest in protecting and promoting the importance of family from the heights of domestic policy to the daily interactions of social routine. The current state of the American family is a precarious one. Like a wrecking ball to a watchtower, unfaithfulness, divorce, abuse, abortion and addiction erode the strength of the family in each of their uniquely unforgiving ways.

The family is the preeminent conveyor of virtue, truth, charity and justice. Inside the quiver of the home, arrows are sharpened to alter the world for good. A mother and father's influence in their child's life is more potent than any school curriculum they will encounter.

Throughout my childhood, I remember my father saying that a man should be the priest, prophet, provider and protector of his home. As my family has continued to grow, I have come to understand and fully realize the importance of his words:

As a priest, he is the spiritual shepherd of his family, nurturing them and regularly interceding before God on their behalf.

As prophet, he humbly strives to lead, admonish and discipline, always directing them not by his own opinion



or the trends of the culture but by the truth of scripture.

He is the head of the house, responsible for providing for his family's needs: food, clothing and shelter, but even more importantly, giving them the unconditional love, confidence, respect and security they need to live in a healthy relationship with each other and those outside their walls.

The primary protector, he is charged with shielding his family from physical, emotional and spiritual threats that would be harmful, negative and destructive to individual family members and the collective unit.

There are so many things a father's love gives — and so many things that a lack of it destroys.

God gives us the greatest example of a father's love. His love is sacrificial, patient, kind, humble, honest, forgiving, faithful and selfless. It is constant and unchanging. Though we do so imperfectly, we train up children in the way they should go, not only because we are commanded to but because we have a long-term perspective that understands

the multiplication effect tomorrow of our diligence today.

We, as father and mother and husband and wife, love and serve each other so that our progeny feels the security necessary for them to flourish. We sacrifice one more moment of "me time" for "we time" because we have committed to guide them through life with a relational intimacy built on the transparency and trust that successive moments together can produce. While their bodies mature and grow with each passing week, the love, discipline, kindness, perseverance and ambition that we purposefully demonstrate and instill in them will mature in like manner, until the time comes for it to overflow into the children that will one day sit in car seats behind them.

Through war, natural disaster and moral relativism, families have weathered countless storms throughout America's history. In many ways, the living room is still more powerful than the court room and the kitchen table more influential than the halls the nation's most hallowed

institutions. What happens within purposeful, faith-filled homes, will reverberate for generations.

Even today, exhausted young parents are raising someone else's mom or dad, cradling an opportunity to impact generations they may never see. Assuredly, there is no such thing as the perfect parent. But it is not our perfection that makes us dynamic parents; it is our honesty when we make mistakes and our mental, spiritual, physical and emotional presence in a world of distractions.

And though they can sometimes seem less than forgiving of our chronic fatigue, bedtimes and rules, our children should expect us to pursue the very best for them in preparing them to one day leave the nest and soar into adulthood. This reality should fill our sails and chart our course as caretakers of the boys and girls we have been graciously given to steward.

The way we pour into our children matters because our intentional actions now can have life-defining ramifications on children yet to be born. Likewise, the posture and policy of this nation now, toward both family and faith, will similarly deliver a proper return.

.....
Benjamin Watson is a former NFL tight end. He was drafted by the New England Patriots in 2004 and went on to win Super Bowl XXXIX with the team over the Philadelphia Eagles. Before retiring, he played 15 years in the NFL for the New England Patriots, Cleveland Browns, Baltimore Ravens and New Orleans Saints. Today, Mr. Watson is an outspoken Christian and activist. He's written two books, "Under Our Skin," which addresses the racial divide in America, and "The New Dad's Playbook," which is a must-read for any father with a newborn. He and wife Kirsten have seven children.

Trust fuels life and family



By Henry Cloud

I was sitting on a plane doing some research on trust when the man sitting next to me asked me what I was doing.

“Researching ‘trust,’” I replied.

“Oh...well, I don’t trust anybody,” he quickly shot back.

“Really?” I asked.

“Absolutely,” he said, “I learned a long time ago, you can’t trust people. I only trust myself.”

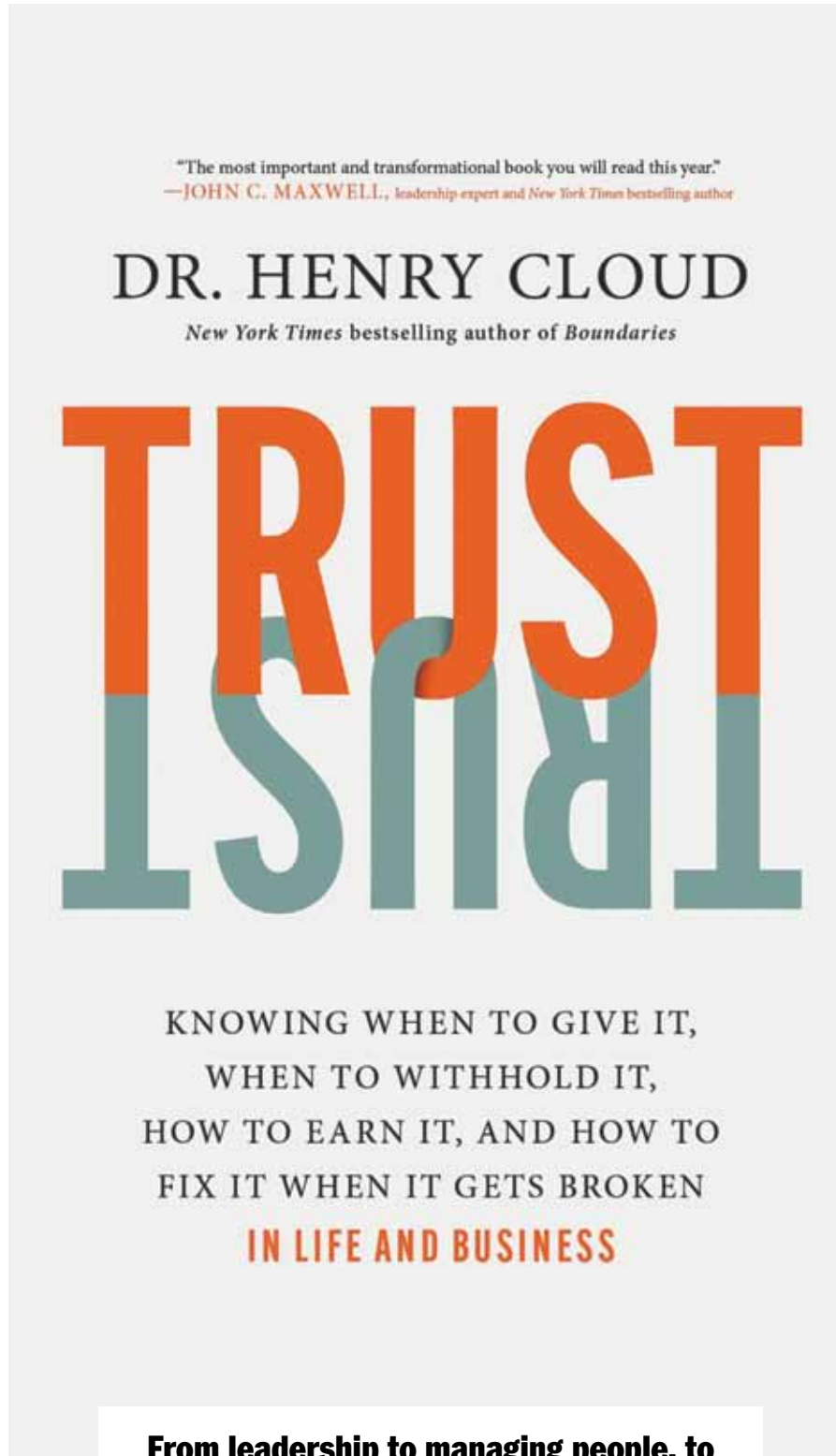
I can’t remember exactly how I said this, but the thought was: “Well...I am a psychologist and you are crazy. Look out the window. You are at 40,000 feet. Did you get yourself up here? No...you trusted some pilots that you have not even met. And how do you know the guy that fueled the plane didn’t put chocolate milk in the tank? You trust people all the time. Nothing works without it.”

“But,” I added, “if I heard your story, I bet there have been some times when you have been deeply hurt, let down or betrayed in some significant way, and that might have given you that view?”

We talked further, and as I have heard many times, there was a lot of hurt he had suffered, and he had developed his worldview honestly. But, as I also ascertained, it had caused a lot of dysfunction as he had tried to live life that way. And it saddened me.

As a leadership consultant who works with CEOs and their teams and as a psychologist who has worked with a lot of various kinds of issues with people, there are very few times that I get called into a situation that before very long, we do not find some breakdown, blind spots, or fear around the dynamics of trust. From leadership to managing people, to scaling a business, to making a marriage or family function well, trust has to be truly nurtured, guarded and lived out well. When it isn’t, problems ensue.

The reason? *Because all of life depends upon trust.* We are hardwired for it, from birth. We have mirror neurons, and other abilities to sense when



From leadership to managing people, to scaling a business, to making a marriage or family function well, trust has to be truly nurtured, guarded and lived out well.

someone is authentic, true and caring that either push us to hit the “go” button, or cause us to pause or pull away. No investors write checks without trust, nor customers buy a product, nor employees wholeheartedly give their best to a leader without trust. Much less wives, husbands, or children. When it is working, we thrive. When it is broken, we don’t. Period.

So, where does it come from? When I wrote the book “Trust,” I outlined a summary of all of the research into five critical factors that make us able to trust someone and also cause us to hit “no.” Briefly, we trust someone who:

- We feel understood deeply. Someone who understands what we need and what hurts us, what makes us happy and what doesn’t.

- We feel has the motive of being “for” us. They want the best for us and not only themselves. Their intent is to always do well by us and for us. They “have our back” in all decisions.

- Has the ability to pull off and deliver what we are trusting them to do. If in business or a relationship, we must have confidence that they have the capacity to do what we are depending on them to fulfill. They have the skills.

- Has the character to show up in the way we need for them to. Their “makeup” fits the context of what we are trusting them for. If the situation is going to take courage, they have it. Or a cool head, compassion or patience. Way past foundational honesty and integrity, their personal makeup is one where they will be who we need them to be in that situation.

- Has a track record. What happened the last time something like this was entrusted to them either by us or someone else? Our minds build mental maps of someone as we experience them, and we expect the same from them next time unless some change has occurred that creates a new map.

When these factors are there, we have pretty solid ground to stand upon. But, we also need to have the ability to trust well...the ability to discern well and to let go. And where does that come from? Just like the man on the plane, from our experience.

Certainly, the trust muscle is built and grown from adult experience. But far and away, it begins in our developmental years: the family we grew up in. As David said in Psalms 22:9, God “led me to trust you at my mother’s breast.” Simply said, we learn how to trust very early and through many childhood experiences.

When a family lays down a foundation of understanding, motives to help each other, abilities to do what others need, character that is dependable, and a track record of all of those things over time, a person develops the ability to trust well, and not foolishly.

Let’s be a people who promote strong families who do these things well, and as adults, be that kind of family, whether bosses or friends, to those whose trust muscle needs to be repaired. It makes all of life work better.

Dr. Henry Cloud is a clinical psychologist, pastor to pastors and New York Times best-selling author. His 46 books, including the iconic, “Boundaries,” have sold over 20 million copies. As a clinician, he has established treatment centers, created breakthrough models rooted in research, and been a leading voice on mental health and leadership issues worldwide. Dr. Cloud lives in Los Angeles with his wife, Tori, and their two daughters.

AN INCREDIBLE AND UNIQUE HISTORY



THE NEW YORKER
A WYNDHAM HOTEL



Your rendezvous with style.

Conveniently located in midtown Manhattan, just steps away from Penn Station, Madison Square Garden, Times Square and the Javits Center stands The New Yorker, A Wyndham Hotel. Our historical hotel is an iconic Jazz Age-era building, which has drawn some of the most influential travelers in history. Come explore our art deco gem with all of its amenities in the heart of “The City.”

Earn Wyndham Rewards Points • Premium Wi-Fi • Business Center • Concierge Services • Fitness Center • Subway/Railroad Hub

www.newyorkerhotel.com

481 8th Avenue, New York, NY 10001 • +1-212-971-0101

Sowing the seeds for America's 'complete spiritual turnaround'



By Len Munsil

More than a century ago, President Teddy Roosevelt spoke about the significance of traditional families to our civilization's success:

"Just in proportion as the average man and woman are honest, capable of sound judgment and high ideals, active in public affairs — but first of all, sound in their home life, and the father and mother of healthy children whom they bring up well — just so far, and no further, we may count our civilization a success."

By that standard, our civilization today is failing. The percentage of children raised in single-parent homes is more than triple the average in the rest of the world. The juvenile crime rate and the number of young people grappling with substance abuse, depression and anxiety are connected to the acceleration of family breakdown and the pervasive influence of social media.

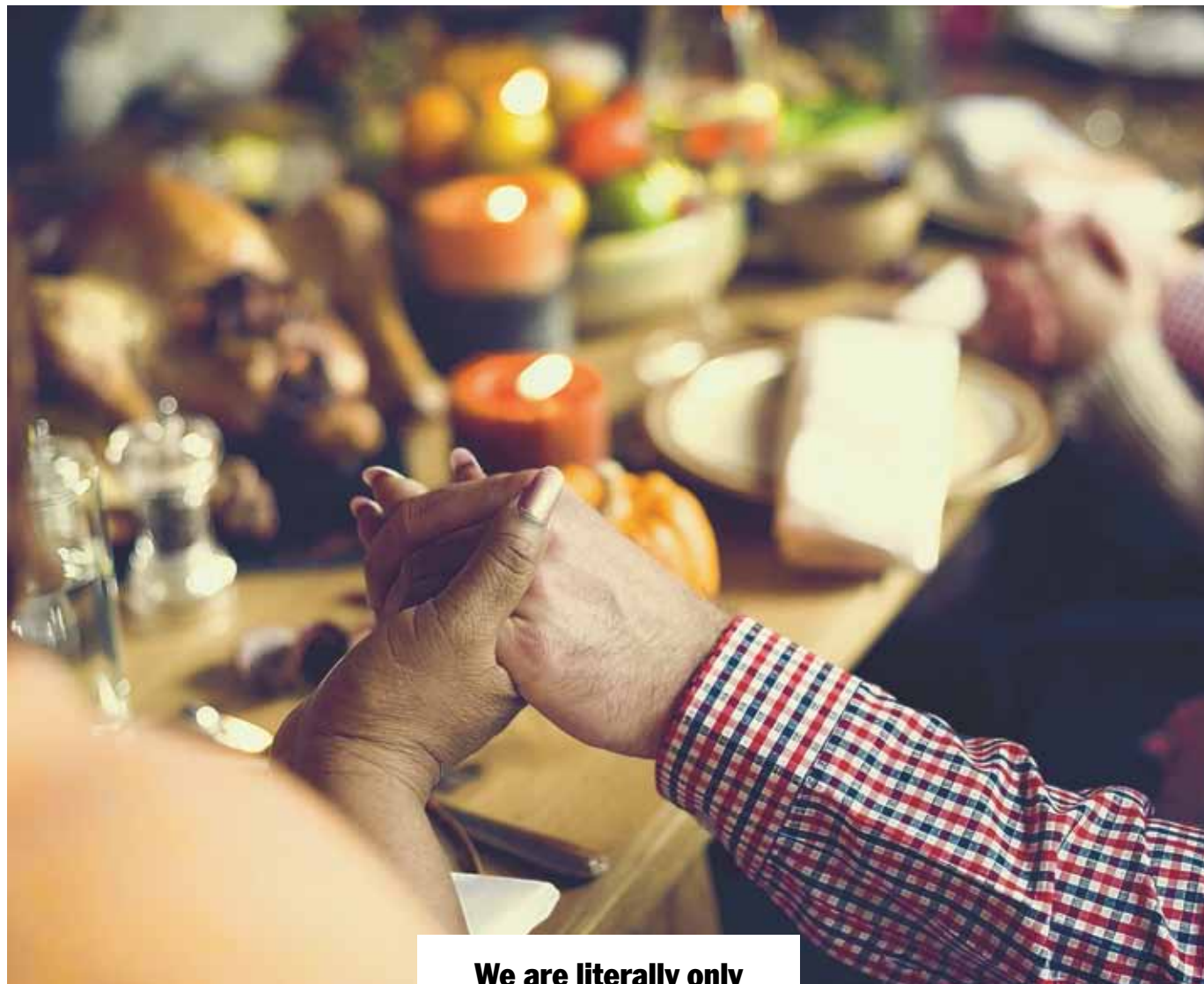
We know that family breakdown is directly related to the declining influence of biblical Christianity in America.

Dr. George Barna, who joined Arizona Christian University in 2019 as co-founder of our Cultural Research Center, has been chronicling this decline for four decades now.

The precipitous decline of Americans with a biblical worldview — from 12% to 4% over the past quarter-century — is staggering. Nearly half of Millennials today are what Dr. Barna refers to as "Don'ts" — they either don't believe, don't know or don't care if there is a God.

For sure, all of the cultural bad news is hard to absorb. Sadly, some are discouraged enough to consider retreating from engagement with the culture.

President Ronald Reagan famously said that "Freedom is never more than



We are literally only one generation away from a complete spiritual turnaround

one generation away from extinction." And that is true.

But I believe the converse is also true: We are also only one generation away from reclaiming our biblical foundations and living in a completely different culture — one characterized by virtue, liberty, peace, justice ... and strong families.

But we must shake off the prevailing mindset that decline is inevitable and recognize that history and Scripture include countless examples of communities and nations turning back to God. In some cases, their circumstances were much more dire than ours today.

To build a different future, we have to think beyond today's headlines and plan longer term than the next election cycle. We need to focus on building institutions — families, churches, Christian schools and universities — that will prepare young people to bring a biblical worldview into the future.

At Arizona Christian University, we are teaching biblical truth to young men and women from all over America

and the world — from 40 states and nearly 30 countries. Our enrollment has tripled since 2010, and we are now America's ninth-fastest growing college. We are equipping and educating Christian leaders to bring biblical wisdom to all areas of cultural influence.

We are also encouraging young people to marry and build families — a Scriptural command often ignored today. In the Bible, children are always viewed as a blessing, not a burden. God's first command to mankind — "Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it" — has never been revoked. And yet most churches either ignore this command or make fun of it. With declining fertility rates worldwide, young families who are open to the blessing of children will help shape our world's future.

Through ACU Press and the Cultural Research Center, we are also providing resources like Dr. Barna's best-selling book "Raising Spiritual Champions." These resources seek to equip parents, churches and Christian school leaders with data-driven wisdom to help children grow up, as Dr. Barna writes, in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord."

We are literally only one generation away from a complete spiritual turnaround — from living in a world where the Gospel is freely proclaimed and all people have the opportunity to flourish. Where families and churches thrive and communities are characterized by hope, opportunity and love. Be encouraged and don't give up!

.....
Len Munsil, J.D., is the sixth President of Arizona Christian University, a culturally and theologically conservative non-profit university in Glendale, Arizona. He and his wife, Dr. Tracy Munsil, have eight adult children and 18 grandchildren.

Reviving family as ‘the foundational social institution created and ordained by God’



By Tracy Munsil

One of the most surprising findings from the America’s Values Study by Dr. George Barna is the stunning consensus around the importance of family to the overwhelming majority of Americans.

No matter their age, demographics or political affiliation, a full 80% of American adults consider family to be a core value — by far the highest-rated of 48 unique values measured in the study.

In fact, 61% of Americans identified family as a value they would be willing to fight for or even die to protect or preserve.

Happiness ranks second, identified as a core value by seven out of 10 Americans — but with only 35% of Americans saying they would fight for or die to protect it. Other hot-button contemporary issues — justice, personal freedom, tolerance and economic equality — lag behind.

According to Dr. Barna, a veteran researcher who’s spent four decades measuring trends in American faith and culture, family remains the dominant lens through which we understand life. It is a constant, foundational element of how we define ourselves as Americans that connects us with our history, enriches how we live our everyday lives and carries our future promise.

Americans deeply value family. But this unity quickly dissipates when the discussion turns to *how* family should be defined. And this raises the question of whether the family can remain a core American value when its definition in the broader culture is contested and no longer reflects God’s design and purpose.

As Dr. Barna explains, Americans may agree about the importance of family, but we want to define family on our own terms and are willing to fight and sacrifice to enjoy a robust family



falling birth rates.

From a biblical worldview perspective, family is the foundational social institution created and ordained by God. It provides the rich context for human flourishing and full expression of human nature. The foundation of the family is the marriage relationship between husband and wife. And from there arises

Today, we are witnessing the definition of family locked in a battle of worldviews.

the context for raising children. We see these in Genesis 1: 27-28 — when God creates human beings as male and female in His image, then commands them to be fruitful and multiply.

God places children in families for nurturing and discipline, and to learn and apply God’s truth (i.e., the biblical worldview) as they grow. It’s where they learn about God’s love and also to love others through family relationships. It’s also where children develop their faith and learn to be disciples of Jesus.

But with the loss of biblical truth in America — Dr. Barna reports that a mere 4% of U.S. adults have a biblical worldview — what’s to stop us from redefining the family?

Sadly, lost in all this redefinition is the stable, deeply shared understanding and experience of family from a biblical worldview perspective — an understanding that has formed the bedrock of human experience for millennia and has anchored American society since before its founding.

And no matter how much we say we value family, the family today is on shaky ground and in desperate need of revival that only God’s truth can accomplish.

The challenge is to move beyond sentimentality and cultural pressure, and to winsomely and courageously work to restore God’s good and glorious intention for the family.

Tracy F. Munsil, Ph.D., is Executive Director of the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University, Publisher of Arizona Christian University Press and Associate Professor of Political Science at the University. The *America’s Values Study: A National Survey of Core Values in the United States 2022 and other worldview research from Dr. George Barna, Director of Research at the Cultural Research Center, is available on center’s website at: www.culturalresearchcenter.com.*

The Core Values of Americans					
	Fight for/die for	Sacrifice resources	Argue in support	Do not feel strongly	Would not defend
Family	61%	19%	14%	4%	2%
Happiness	35%	37%	21%	6%	2%
Justice	38%	30%	25%	5%	2%
Personal independence	38%	30%	24%	5%	3%
Integrity	34%	31%	27%	5%	3%
Kindness	32%	33%	28%	4%	3%
Character	31%	34%	26%	6%	2%
Trustworthiness	32%	32%	28%	6%	3%
Property ownership	32%	32%	25%	8%	4%
Individual growth	29%	35%	28%	7%	2%
Purpose/Meaning of life	33%	29%	29%	8%	2%
Hard work	28%	34%	30%	6%	3%
Stability	27%	33%	30%	7%	3%

Source: America’s Values Study, commissioned by AmericasOne, conducted by Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University, N=3,725 adults, July 2022.

experience of our choosing.

Today, we are witnessing the definition of family locked in a battle of worldviews.

The effort to redefine the family has been going on for quite some time. For example, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (in)famously called for “Abolition of the family!” in the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848.

Today, redefinition takes different forms. Consider arguments against childbearing in the heat of climate-change hysteria. New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez a few years ago put it this way: “Our planet is going to

hit disaster if we don’t turn this ship around and so it’s basically like, there’s a scientific consensus that the lives of children are going to be very difficult. ... And it does lead, I think, young people to have a legitimate question, you know, ‘Is it okay to still have children?’”

Social engineers, progressives and secular intellectuals have long taken aim at reconstituting the family — “from Plato, to Rousseau to B.F. Skinner to Hillary Clinton,” as Nancy Pearcey points out in “*Total Truth*.” And today, we see it in debates over transgenderism, gender fluidity and in

Equipping parents

KEYNON AND BETH AKERS

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

When contemplating the upbringing of our children, the foremost concern that occupies our thoughts are about relaying God's existence and the comprehension of His significance in their lives. It is our heartfelt desire that they develop a personal relationship with God, recognizing that their actions and choices are guided by His principles and moral values. This spiritual foundation encompasses fostering a sense of purpose, meaning, and direction, enabling them to navigate life's complexities with courage, compassion, and integrity.

We strive for our children to be

ambassadors of faith, equipped to spread God's love, compassion, and grace among their peers and the larger community. We love taking intentional moments to encourage them to emulate the teachings of wisdom and godliness. We hope to embolden them to serve as beacons of light, inspiring others through their words, actions, and deeds.

It is also crucial to impart upon our children the importance of utilizing their time, talents, and resources for the greater glory of God. This means helping them discover and develop their unique abilities and talents, while instilling an understanding that these gifts are to be employed for noble and virtuous purposes. By encouraging them to utilize their time wisely, pursuing endeavors



that contribute positively to society, and utilizing their talents to uplift others, they will exemplify the principles of faith in a practical and meaningful manner.

Modern families can effectively maintain strength and connectivity with their desired values by embracing an unapologetic commitment to obeying God's wisdom. These five areas of focus help our family stay strong and unified: prioritizing spiritual growth, establishing non-negotiables in practicing our faith and core values, cultivating devotional habits of prayer and meditation, leading by example as parents, and managing minutiae through paying attention to daily details that shape family life, such as routines, activities, and personal relationships.



LOUIS AND SOMMER VEGA

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

As parents, our minds often wander to our children's future. These thoughts compel us to reflect deeply on the direction our country is taking and its impact on the moral and spiritual compass of our young ones. The need for a return to Christ-centered values becomes ever clearer and pressing.

The challenges our children face in preparing for adulthood are multifaceted. As parents, we believe our role transcends providing for their physical needs; it's about imbuing them with values that will guide them through life's myriad pressures.

Balancing the influence of social media on our children's values is also a formidable challenge. We try to navigate this landscape with wisdom, ensuring that our children's faith and values are not overshadowed by the digital world but are instead complemented by it.

Living out Christ's teachings is a daily journey for us. From simple acts of kindness, to moments of prayerful reflection, we strive to embody the love and grace of Jesus. These practices and experiences are the threads that weave the fabric of our children's character. We are comforted and motivated by the hope that these lessons will pave the way for a life of fruitfulness and success. Proverbs 22:6 serves as guidance in this endeavor: "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old, he will not depart from it." This profound wisdom underscores the importance of laying a strong spiritual foundation.

We have made a commitment to raise our children in a Christ-centered environment. We desire that the impact of such upbringing is profound and enduring, shaping not only the lives of our children but also the moral fabric of our society. Our hope is that our efforts will bear fruit in the lives of our children and the generations to come.

KIMANI AND MOLLY MUSTAFA

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

We are excited to, Lord willing, raise children one day. As Christians, our commitment is to love our family and raise our children to love Jesus and revere Him. A lot of investment must be made to protect our kids from the demoralization of our country. Modern families have a lot more at their fingertips than against them, and we believe that having personal relationships with Jesus and a unified pursuit of him is the best course to take.

Centering marriages around a continued pursuit and love for one another is necessary, just as an active investment in parenting is crucial. Fellowship and building community within the church also unifies the family experience and strengthens faith. Filling in gaps where needed can also support a lot of families — be a father to the fatherless, a mother to someone in need, or provide a loving, helpful hand.

National and local leaders can create policies to protect the family



structure as well, by regulating inappropriate material and protecting children's innocence. Let's allow children to be children, return God to our institutions and classrooms, and uphold God's intention and the sanctity of marriage between men and women.



HARRISON AND TAREN

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

Passing core values to our children demands a purposeful parenting approach in the modern age. For us, it involves a three-pronged approach of identifying, communicating, and modeling our values.

Early in our marriage, we proactively identified the core values we wanted to instill in our children. With three children under five, our current teaching methods typically involve repetition and reminders (e.g. we'll often say things like "You get

Strengthening homes

JOSHUA AND RENESHA HODGES

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

We believe there are several key strategies that can help modern families stay strong and connected to their values. Effective communication lies at the heart of any strong family unit. Modern families can prioritize open, honest communication by actively listening to one another and engaging in meaningful, nonjudgmental conversations. This can create an environment where family members feel heard, understood, and valued, fostering a deeper connection.

Implementing exclusive family time is crucial for strengthening familial bonds and imparting important values. We set

aside regular time for activities such as family meals, outings, and game nights to create opportunities for meaningful interactions and shared experiences. These moments serve as valuable teaching opportunities, allowing us to communicate our values through actions and discussions in a natural and relaxed setting.

As many families find strength and guidance in their faith and spirituality, keeping God and His Word as a central focus provides a moral compass and source of shared values that tie family members together. Engaging in religious practices, discussions, and activities helps us reinforce these values and create a sense of unity within our family.

Today, the concept of “it takes a village” still remains relevant. We utilize the



support of family members, close friends, and our community to provide additional sources of guidance, wisdom, and emotional support for our family. Building and maintaining strong relationships outside the immediate family has enriched our family’s support network and strengthened our values as well.

Overall, modern families can effectively keep their bonds strong and connected to their desired values by prioritizing communication, implementing dedicated family time, placing importance on faith and spirituality, and using the support of their extended community. By proactively embracing these strategies, we have navigated the complexities of the modern world while staying true to our cherished values.

JASON AND RACHEL BRUBAKER

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

In a world of many messages, we want to be the loudest voice to our children. Today’s Christian parents must be intentional and not merely outsource the moral upbringing of their children to the local church or others. We must spend time in our homes with our children by having real conversations about faith and the moral implications of faith in Jesus to those of us who proclaim Him.

We believe it’s important that Christian families actively engage in their local church through fellowship and volunteering. The local church is integral to the life of Christians and designed by God to be His primary means to bless families and the world.

A focus on the Word of God in the home is also essential. It can simply be reading one verse and asking if anyone has questions or thoughts, then praying together as a family. This practice anchors a family in unchangeable truth and provides a sense of stability. Being open and honest about our faith, and talking about how God is working in our lives



sets a great example for children.

Prayer is vital as well, because it draws us closer to God, and teaches our children that there is an authority over parents, too. A lifestyle of prayer models for our children that we are deeply reliant on God to sustain and equip us to live out the life He has called us to live.

Elected leaders can also help in raising children by giving parents the freedom to educate their children in accordance with their faith. Teaching students about worldviews that differ from Christianity can be insightful and helpful as well, to prepare children for the future and foster greater understanding, respect, and unity among the next generation.

what you get, and you don’t throw a fit” or “Jesus loves us all,” or we’ll sing songs as we lay them down to sleep). As our children grow, we hope to evolve these conversations into more engaging and reflective interactions. The key point is we find ways to communicate our values as living principles shaping our family’s culture, not just abstract concepts.

Modeling is equally crucial, as many lessons are “caught” rather than “taught.” We strive to demonstrate our values in daily actions, decision-making, and interactions, providing a tangible example for our children to emulate.

We also recognize the importance of not parenting in isolation. We intentionally spend a lot of time with a group of friends from church, comprising people in a similar life stage, who can offer mutual support, lightening the burden of parenting in our fast-paced world. Strong family support is another blessing, as the values we have for our children mirrors the values our parents tried to instill in us. Celebrating traditions, retelling our shared story, and connecting with extended relatives all contribute to imparting values in ways we couldn’t achieve alone.

TONY AND QUALAHNIA RANDALL

PARENTS OF ROYCE, JORDYN AND JOURNEE

UPPER MARLBORO, MARYLAND

As our country’s moral fabric and traditional values continue to evolve at a rapid rate, finding ways of collaboratively supporting parents in the process of raising their children has never been more important. The church can provide a moral and spiritual foundation by offering family-oriented programs, counseling, and most importantly fostering a sense of community.

Community involvement is critical, as it can create a supportive network of resources and supports that anchor their members and bring them closer together. As the old African adage states very truly...It takes a village to raise a child.

Local leaders can contribute by investing in safe public spaces, recreational facilities, adult education programs, and holistic support as well as ensuring their communities have healthy food options. Locally, schools also play a pivotal role in a child’s development, and their effective engagement in open communication and cooperation with parents, providing resources for academic support, and encouraging extracurricular activities fosters a holistic learning environment.

At the national level, leaders can advocate for and implement family-friendly policies such as affordable healthcare, parental leave, tax support and accessible education. Advocating for policies that address economic disparities, ensuring a viable living wage, and supporting working parents is vital for family stability.

Additionally, community organizations can organize parenting workshops, mental health awareness / resources, and promote inclusivity and diversity to create an environment where every child feels valued. Collaboration between these entities enhances the overall well-being of children by creating a cohesive support system.



Our children’s futures depend upon our ability to develop a holistic approach involving the church, community, local and national leaders, schools, and other community organizations. By working together, these groups can address the essential needs of the family units they serve, ensuring an intentional approach to child development, from spiritual and moral guidance to educational and economic support, ultimately contributing to the well-rounded upbringing of our next generation.

The 5 love languages of children: The secret to loving children effectively



By Gary Chapman

He was 13 years old, had run away from home and ended up in my counseling office. Among other things, he said: “My parents don’t love me. They love my brother, but they don’t love me.” I knew his parents, and I knew they loved him. The problem was they had never learned how to express their love in a way that was emotionally meaningful to their son.

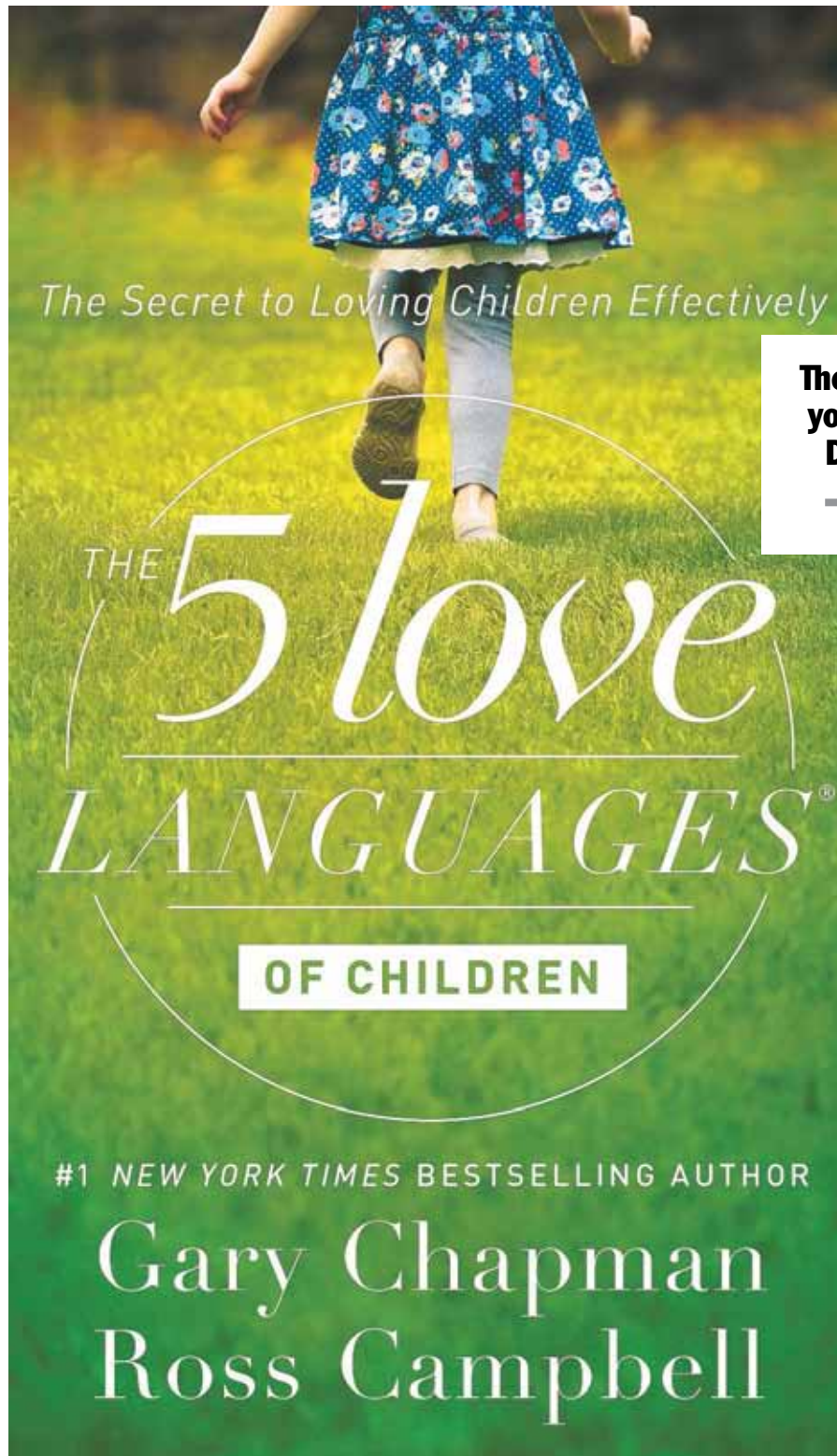
I have often said to parents: “The question is not: Do you love your children? The question is: Do your children feel loved?”

Almost everyone agrees that one of our deepest emotional needs is to feel loved by the significant people in our lives. Parents tend to naturally love their children.

However, many parents do not understand that what makes one child feel loved will not make another child feel loved. Each child has what I call a primary love language. If they do not receive love in their “love language,” they will not feel loved even though the parents are sincerely loving them. My research has shown that there are basically five love languages. Let me share each of them briefly.

Physical Touch – We have long known the emotional power of affirming touches. That is why we pick up babies, hold and cuddle them. Long before they understand the meaning of the word love, infants thrive on physical touch. As they get older, they sit on our laps as we read a book. Then we play ball, wrestle, give them pats on the back and high-fives. For some children, physical touch is their primary love language.

Words of Affirmation – Each love language has many dialects. For example, “words of affection” focus on who the child is, such as: “You are so beautiful.” “I like the way you smile.”



Or, simply: “I love you.”

“Words of Praise” focus on performance, such as: “Great catch.” “Good job.” “I like what you did.”

“Words of Encouragement” instill courage: “That’s close.” “Almost there.” “I know you can do it.” Some children thrive on words of affirmation.

Quality Time – Giving your child your undivided attention. This may involve “quality conversations,” in which the parent is fully engaged in a

discussion with the child. It may also be playing a game together, in which the child has your full attention. What parent has not heard these words: “Mommy, can we play together?” They are asking for quality time.

Receiving Gifts – It is universal to give gifts as an expression of love. The gifts need not be expensive. We are seeking to give gifts that will interest the child at their age level. If “receiving gifts” is a child’s primary love language,

the gift says: “My parents love me.”

Acts of Service – Doing something for the benefit of the child. We are forced to speak this language the moment they are born. The infant can do nothing for himself/herself. Parents put the food in and take the food out. They do everything for the infant. Acts of Service should be age appropriate. Primarily, we are doing things for them they cannot do for themselves. As they get older, we

The question is not: Do you love your children? The question is: Do your children feel loved?

speak this language by teaching them to do things for themselves. For example, when they are young, we wash their clothes, but as they get older we teach them how to run a washing machine.

So, how do you discover a child’s primary love language? First, by observing how they express love to you. When my son was young, he would run to the door when I came home and grab my legs and climb on me. His love language was physical touch.

Second, what does the child complain about most often? A mother shared that her 6-year-old son said: “We don’t ever go to the park any more since the baby came.” He is revealing that his primary love language is “quality time.” Before the baby came, he had his mother’s full attention at the park.

Third, what does the child request most often? If, when you go the grocery store, the child says, “Be sure and bring me a surprise,” receiving gifts may well be their love language.

Please don’t limit yourself to only speaking a child’s primary love language. The key is to give heavy doses of their primary language, but also speak the other four as well. We want the child to learn how to receive and give love in all five languages. That leads to an emotionally healthy adult, which is what all parents desire.

Dr. Gary Chapman is a well-known family counselor and author of more than 40 books. He hosts a nationally syndicated radio program, “A Love Language Minute,” and a Saturday morning program, “Building Relationships with Dr. Gary Chapman” that air on more than 400 stations. His book, “The 5 Love Languages,” has been published in more than 50 languages and sold more than 14 million copies.

Why This Special Dictionary Matters!

These days words get twisted by worldviews that are just not true.

Here's a dictionary with definitions that are rooted in the Bible.

What's missing in today's thinking is Biblical context. A dictionary inculcates either a secular or a Christian worldview through definitions. Webster's 1828 Dictionary has been called the most important reprint of the 21st Century, the essential tool of education for Christians.

Know the power of your words. Ignorance of the power of language leaves us and our children vulnerable to false "realities." Today in our culture, much of what we have known to be true is now considered "fluid," from our individual identities to the words we use to communicate ideas.

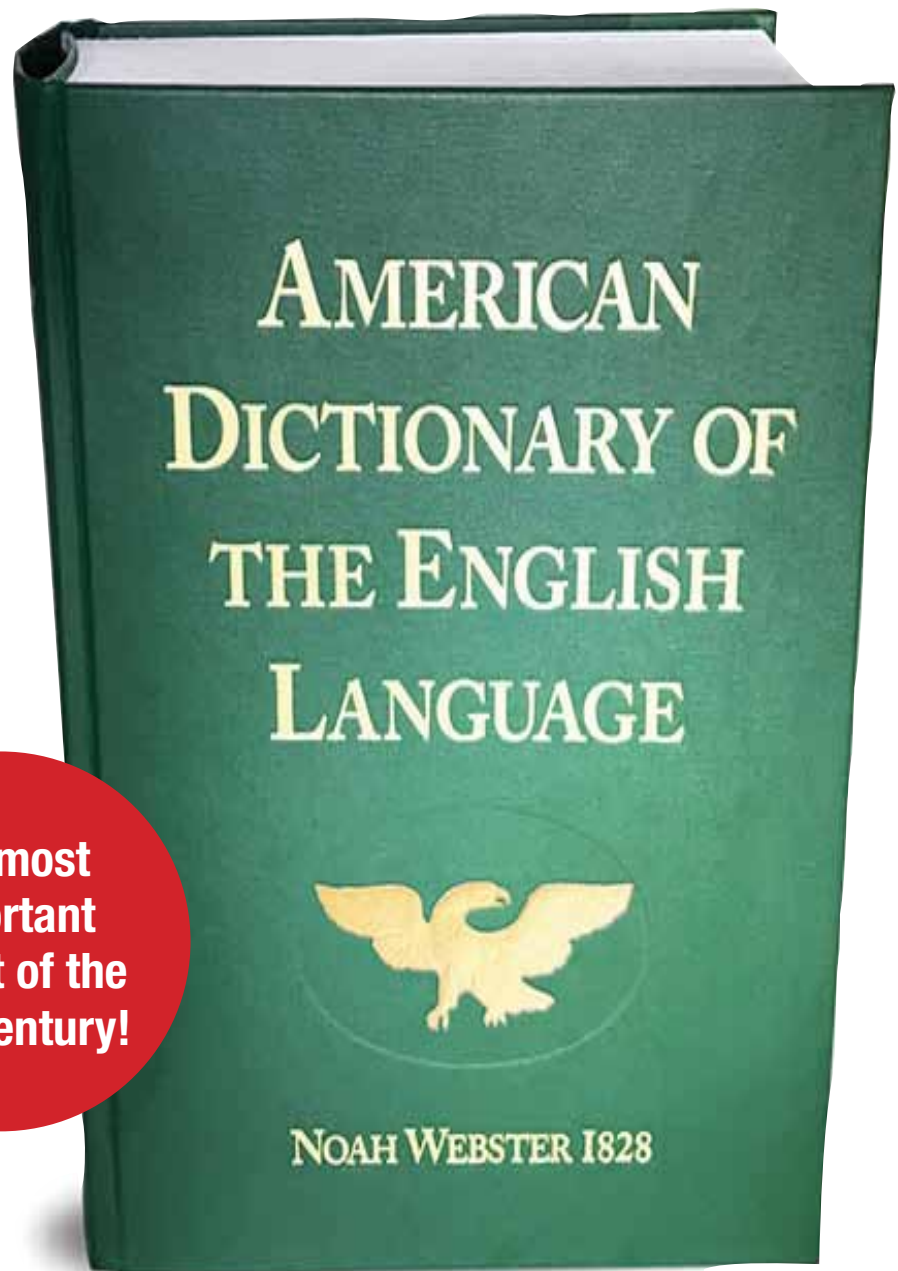
Language is the expression of ideas, and our means of preserving and protecting those ideas comes through the power of our words. *Webster's 1828 American Dictionary of the English Language* is needed more than ever to preserve the meaning of words and protect us against false ideas.

It is the only dictionary with a Biblical worldview and is the tool you need to effectively communicate in today's culture. Words and language are our common means of understanding reality, therefore be sure yours come from a Biblical perspective that preserves Biblical principles.

"I love the Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary! I truly believe if we are to live and think Biblically we need to define terms from a Biblical perspective."

- Homeschool Mom

**The most
important
reprint of the
21st Century!**



Order your volume today and save 20%!

This is an elegant hardback, with a gold-stamped embossed cover and 2,000 pages. Regular price is \$64.55.

Now only \$51.64 with code WT20.

To learn more and to order please
visit www.FACE.net/dictionary or call us at **(800) 352-3223**



museum of the Bible

In work and family, the Bible has transformative power



By Steve Green

Jackie was a high school senior when I proposed. We had dated only five months, and five months later we were married.

The decision was easy for me. I knew I loved her and wanted to get married, though it took some time for me to get her to that point.

On our first date she wasn't even sure it was a date. She agreed to the dinner because she thought I wanted to inquire about another girl. After a while, when I hadn't even brought the subject up, she started thinking, maybe this is a date! I'm glad she didn't know it was a date, otherwise she might have declined. Fortunately for me, she said yes to the date and to my marriage proposal.

Two years after getting married we had our first child. He would be our only son of six children. Getting married is a life-changing event. When you are by yourself, you make all the decisions. But once you get married, deciding where to

eat becomes a discussion, a negotiation, or it can even become an argument. Life is forever changed.

Having children, as well, is life-changing. Your time is no longer "your time." The middle of the night is usually "my time" to sleep, but with a new

As we started our family, Jackie and I knew early on in our marriage that our priority, our first responsibility, was to raise our children to the best of our ability. That included providing for them, teaching them, disciplining them as needed and, above all, loving them. There

easier than being successful in raising a family. They are encouraged to work hard at work and even harder at home. Our stores are only open 66 hours each week. This gives opportunity to serve our customers and allows our employees the time to spend on their most important job, their families.

Jackie and I are blessed. We grew up in loving homes, each of our parents grew up in loving homes, and the book that has guided all of us has been and is the Bible.



The Bible in America exhibit.

What I have learned is that when life is lived according to the guidelines God intended, it has served mankind well.

family member in the house another discussion ensues to determine who gets to give up their time to take care of the needs of others.

With each new phase of life there is opportunity for friction and division, or the challenges can be an opportunity to grow together. We have found that the Bible has been a great guide for life, especially in times of struggle. Jesus sums up the teachings of the Bible through two directives. Love God and love others. Because of the extreme love Jesus showed for us by dying for us, we have the ability to love others. He modeled for us how we can love others even when it's not deserved.

were times when I was jealous of my wife because she was able to take on the primary role of our most important job, raising our children. While I went to work to provide for the family, she was able to stay home doing the important work.

This lesson was not something we came up with on our own; it was modeled for us by our parents. On a regular basis at Hobby Lobby's corporate campus, we invite our new co-managers in to learn about the company. My dad, who is CEO of the company, will address those in attendance and let them know that their family is more important than their job. He finds that being successful on the job can be

What I have learned is that when life is lived according to the guidelines God intended, it has served mankind well. That is what motivated our family to be a part of building the Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C. We want to invite all people to engage with the transformative power of the Bible.

Steve Green is President of Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc., the world's largest privately owned arts and crafts retailer. He is also Chairman of the Board of the 430,000-square-foot Museum of the Bible, which opened in Washington, D.C., in November 2017 and is dedicated to a scholarly and engaging presentation of the Bible's impact, history, and narrative. Mr. Green has authored four books, including "The Bible in America," which explains how the Bible has guided America's history and continues to shape both national and personal destinies.

OCEAN PEACE, INC.

FISHING VESSEL MANAGEMENT COMPANY



Ocean Peace is proud to support Victorious Family and other faith-based non-profit organizations that promote the cause of helping parents create successful God-centered families. America, our economy and our society cannot thrive without parents raising families that live a faith-based lifestyle.

www.oceanpeaceinc.com

The media-wise family: A blueprint to raising godly children



By Ted Baehr

often speak around the world in places such as Poland, India, Japan, or on the border of Laos. When I go into the jungle, I find satellite dishes run by generators connected by exposed wires that bring Hollywood entertainment into the grass huts. The children in these villages try to dress like the Hollywood stars and try to mimic their lives—right down to the drugs, drinking, and sexual promiscuity.

Clearly, what happens in Hollywood does not stay in Hollywood.

When I am in Hollywood to preview a movie at a screening, I often visit studio executives to help them understand the influence that they are

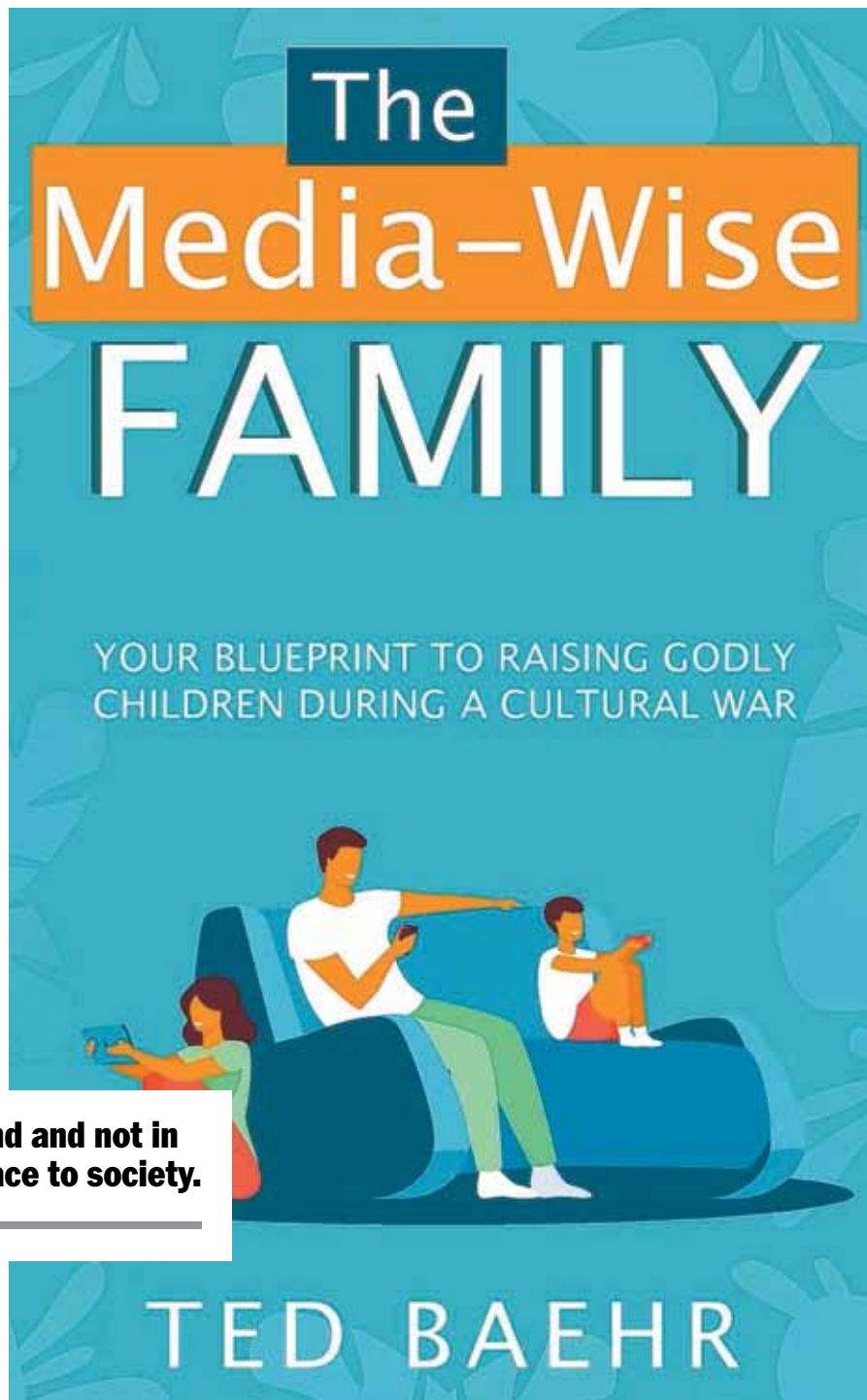
To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society.

having on the children of the world. The good news is that many of them are listening. The type of entertainment being produced is gradually moving away from salacious, ultraviolet, R-rated movies to family films with faith—movies such as “Journey To Bethlehem,” “The Chosen,” and “The Jesus Revolution.” Almost every studio is pursuing the Christian, faith-based audience.

As for other entertainment that is not faith based, there is an effective way for families to learn how to be culture-wise and media-wise.

Five keys of media wisdom

As director of the TV Center at City University of New York in the late 1970s, I helped develop some of the first media literacy courses. Since then, many universities and states have developed media literacy courses based on my



book, “The Media-Wise Family Part I.”

Specifically, there are five keys of media wisdom that will help build the media-wise family.

Key 1: Understand the influence of the media on your children.

After the 1999 Columbine High School massacre, former CBS President Leslie Moonves put it quite bluntly: “Anyone who thinks the media has nothing to do with this is an idiot.”

More than 30 years ago, major medical associations concluded that there’s absolutely no doubt that those who are heavy viewers of violence

demonstrate increased acceptance of aggressive attitudes and aggressive behavior. As the results of thousands of studies on youth violence prove, watching media violence causes violence among children. Bad company corrupts good character—whether that bad company is gangs, peer pressure, or violent movies, video games and television programs.

Key 2: Protect the eyes of innocence—at different ages.

Ascertain your children’s susceptibility at each stage of cognitive development. Not only do children

see the media differently at each stage of development, but also different children are susceptible to different stimuli. As the research of the National Institute of Mental Health revealed many years ago, some children want to copy media violence, some are susceptible to other media influences, some become afraid, and many become desensitized.

Key 3: Teach your children how the media communicates its messages.

Just as children spend the first 14 years of their lives learning grammar with respect to the written word, they also need to be taught the grammar of 21st century mass media. They need to be able to think critically about the messages being programmed for them.

Key 4: Discuss worldviews and why it’s good to turn the culture right side up.

Help your children know the fundamentals of Christian faith. Children need to be able to apply their beliefs and moral values to the culture and to the mass media of entertainment. Parents typically have an easier time than teachers with this pillar because they are free to discuss their personal beliefs.

Key 5: Educate the heart to understand cultural and media wisdom.

Help your children learn how to ask the right questions. When children know the right questions to ask, they can arrive at the right answers to the problems presented by the mass media of entertainment. For instance, if the hero in the movie your child is watching wins by murdering and mutilating his victims, will your children be able to question this hero’s behavior, no matter how likable that character may be?

As President Theodore Roosevelt said, “To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society.”

Cultural and media wisdom involves educating heart, minds, and spirits. Teach your family to be media-wise, become informed (see www.movieguide.org), and spend your entertainment dollars wisely.

.....
Dr. Ted Baehr is an award-winning producer, Founder and Publisher of Movieguide®: The Family Guide to Movies and Entertainment, and Chairman of the Christian Film & Television Commission® ministry. In June 2023, his book, “The Media-Wise Family Part I: Your Blueprint to Raising Godly Children During a Cultural War,” was released in paperback.

Victorious Family's Research and Equipping Family Discipleship Institute empowers futures

By Victorious Family

In a world where the foundations of family values are being tested, there arises a pressing need for intentional, well-researched solutions. Victorious Family, which has spent 15 years in the realm of family discipleship, has taken a groundbreaking step towards societal transformation with the establishment of its Research and Equipping Family Discipleship Institute. We are envisioning a newly built campus to open near Atlanta in late 2025.

Unraveling Challenges through Research

The challenges faced by families in today's fast-paced, ever-changing world are complex and multifaceted. Victorious Family recognizes the importance of delving deep into these challenges, understanding their nuances, and formulating solutions rooted in both time-tested wisdom and contemporary insights.

The research arm of Victorious Family is committed to unraveling the intricacies of modern family dynamics. Through comprehensive studies, surveys, and in-depth analyses, the institute aims to identify the core issues affecting family life. By tapping into a wealth of data, they not only diagnose the problems but also pave the way for evidence-based, effective solutions.

Equipping Families for Discipleship

Knowledge, when coupled with practical application, becomes a catalyst for change. Victorious Family's Equipping Family Discipleship program is designed to bridge the gap between theory and practice. It serves as a beacon for families seeking to embark on a transformative journey towards intentional discipleship.

The institute offers a range of resources, from insightful guides to interactive workshops, all aimed at providing families with the tools they need to nurture enduring values within their homes. This equipping process goes beyond mere theoretical knowledge; it empowers parents to be intentional spiritual leaders, fostering an environment where faith is not just spoken but lived.

The Impact of Family-Centered Research and Equipping

The synergy between research and equipping is the cornerstone of Victorious Family's institute.

The insights garnered through rigorous research inform the development of practical, tailored resources in the Equipping program. This dynamic

VICTORIOUS
FAMILY

Take the Next Step

JOIN THE
MOVEMENT!



relationship ensures that the solutions offered are not just theoretical but grounded in the real challenges faced by families today.

As families engage with the Equipping program, they become part of a larger movement—a movement towards intentional parenting, strong family bonds, and enduring faith. The impact extends beyond individual homes, creating a ripple effect in communities and society at large. Families equipped with the knowledge and tools to navigate the complexities of modern life emerge as beacons of resilience and strength.

How You Can Contribute to the Movement

Victorious Family's Research and Equipping Family Discipleship Institute is not just an initiative; it's a movement

towards societal rejuvenation. You, as a parent, faith-based leader, marketplace leader, family foundation, community member, or supporter of strong family values, can actively contribute to this transformative endeavor.

- Engage in Research Surveys: Be a part of the solution by participating in Victorious Family's research surveys. Your experiences and insights contribute to a deeper understanding of contemporary family dynamics.

- Explore Equipping Resources: Whether you're a seasoned parent or just starting your family journey, Victorious Family's Equipping program has resources tailored for you. Explore the guides, workshops, and practical tools designed to empower you in your role as an intentional parent.

- Spread the Word: The impact of this

institution extends with every family it reaches. Spread the word in your community, share resources with friends, and be an advocate for intentional family discipleship.

- Financial Support: Consider supporting Victorious Family's Research and Equipping Institution financially. Your contribution helps sustain valuable research initiatives and ensures that equipping resources remain accessible to families worldwide. Would you consider helping us to build a state-of-the-art training and equipping institution which will serve as a beacon of hope for the American family. We are praying that our need of \$3.0M could be reached by year end 2024.

Join the Movement, Ignite Change

In a world hungry for solutions, Victorious Family's Research and Equipping Family Discipleship Institute stands as a beacon of hope. By joining this movement, you actively contribute to the revival of family-centered values, shaping a future where families are resilient, values endure, and society stands strong.

Visit <http://victoriousfamily.org/institute/> to register for an interactive founder session and learn more about being a part of this transformative journey. Together, let's empower families, one intentional step at a time.

Donations: <https://victoriousfamily.org/donate>



Nehemiah Institute

By Daniel Smithwick

www.worldviewcheckup.org

We all know America is in a deep worldview crisis; a battle over ideas on how the world should work. In today's culture where all ideas are presented as being equal and embracing a variety of beliefs is considered open-minded, how do we know what to believe? Do you consider yourself to hold a "Biblical worldview"? What if there was a simple, easy to use instrument that would tell us how our beliefs compare with Biblical teaching? That evaluation tool exists and is called *WorldviewCheckup*, with more than three decades helping individuals, churches and schools know if they are effectively making disciples, who know how to apply Biblical principles to all spheres of life.

WorldviewCheckup will give you instant feedback as to your worldview in the spheres of Politics/government, Economics, Education, Religion and Social Issues (PEERS). Don't wonder about where your beliefs fit — take the *WorldviewCheckup* today, with **total** confidentiality. No personal data is ever revealed.

***WorldviewCheckup* can be accessed here:
www.worldviewcheckup.org.**

WorldviewCheckup is a low-cost, easy to use feedback tool that affirms the areas of your thinking that align with Biblical teaching, while revealing areas where the contrary ideas of our day have crept in, so you can re-think as needed to form a scripture-based perspective (Romans 12:2). The program also includes several Position Papers and other resources to aid in transforming our mind to be in agreement with a mature biblical worldview.

The cost of *WorldviewCheckup* is \$17.76 but discounted with use of Ambassador Code **AMB200** in the checkout process.

**For more information please contact
Nehemiah Institute at 800-948-3101
or via the website.**

*Daniel Smithwick is Founder & President of Nehemiah Institute.
Author of PEERS Worldview Test and PILLARS worldview course.*



Christian Education Initiative

By Dr. Kevin Clauson

www.christedu.org

It is not trite to say, "America is at a Crossroads." Not only are we at a Crossroads but the decision about our future is being made during a social earthquake. The left road will take us to the unreality that is based on lies and deceit and results in pain, suffering, death, and despair. The right road is paved with objective truth and will take us toward prosperity, blessings and hope for the future.

Why do we keep trusting in the familiar leaders that created this mess? It is time to stop and consider: who or what is in control of the future? Whoever is in charge of education is in charge of the future. The current situation is unsustainable.

Each generation has been gradually conditioned to be willing subjects of increased civil government dependency. No nation in history has ever survived this level of dependency without a total collapse and painful restructuring of their lives.

A group of highly qualified reformers and thinkers who have already demonstrated competency have come together to enhance each other and offer new models of education that can turn things around. Instead of spending any more time, money, or effort on trying to reform the federally funded education system, Christian Education Initiative's member organizations are already demonstrating success.

Check CEI out at www.christedu.org

Dr. Kevin L. Clauson is the Executive Director of Christian Education Initiative (CEI). He also serves as President, The Patrick Henry Institute (PHI) and Christendom Bible College, a dba of PHI.



The Foundation for
American Christian Education
Transforming the Mind and Heart of a Nation

Foundation for American Christian Education

By Carey Woodruff

How can Americans invest billions of tax dollars in public education, yet the results are abysmally poor? Our students test low in every area of academic achievement, school facilities and infrastructures across the nation are crumbling; school districts face transgender issues, and bullying, violence, and drugs are so common they are no longer newsworthy. What has happened to government-provided education, and more importantly, what is the solution?

The preeminence of the Bible in the classroom that encouraged scholarship and the awareness of our heritage of Christian self-government was displaced over the decades of the 19th century, causing the decline of education and, thus, our nation.

However, there is good news! The philosophy and method of education that held sway at the founding of our nation, called the Principle Approach® produced the generation of citizens that framed our United States Constitution. There is a resurgence among parents, pastors, and patriots in every part of our nation who are restoring this method of education for our youth. The Principle Approach lays Biblical principles at the heart of every subject, producing results in scholarship, reasoning, and character. It builds future citizens equipped for the privilege of self-government. The Principle Approach® method has been validated by consistently producing the highest scores on the PEERS Test.

What are some of these principles we teach the children?

Five Principles of Liberty	versus	Counterfeits of these Principles
1. God's Principle of Individuality		1. Collectivism and Multiculturalism
2. Self-government and Christian character		2. Government Control and Regulation
3. Conscience as Property		3. Welfare State's Redistribution of Property
4. Local Self-Government		4. Expanding Centralization of Power
5. American Political Union and the Sovereignty of the Nation-State		5. Subjection to International Bodies

The Foundation for American Christian Education (FACE) has a mission of returning Biblical principles, scholarship, and Christian character to our youth through Principle Approach education so that, once again, we can be a self-governing nation.

www.FACE.net

Carey Woodruff is Executive Vice President of the Foundation for American Christian Education (FACE). Carey serves the publishing and teaching mission of FACE that supports private Christian education, trains educators in schools and homes, and engages like-minded organizations in the restoration of America's moral, political, economic, and educational base.

The pursuit of healthy family rhythms



By Jeff Norris

Parenting often feels like mere survival. The thought of pursuing anything outside of making it through the day can feel overwhelming. I get it. My wife and I are currently in the throes of parenting in the teenage years. We have learned, firsthand, that the challenges of parenting don't ease as your children age, they merely change.

As a pastor, I often ask parents how they're doing. The answer I most often get? Exhausted. Which is all the more reason to pursue healthy rhythms in our own personal lives and in the lives of our families, so that exhaustion and survival are replaced with endurance and thriving. There are many healthy rhythms I could mention here, but for this space, let's consider three:

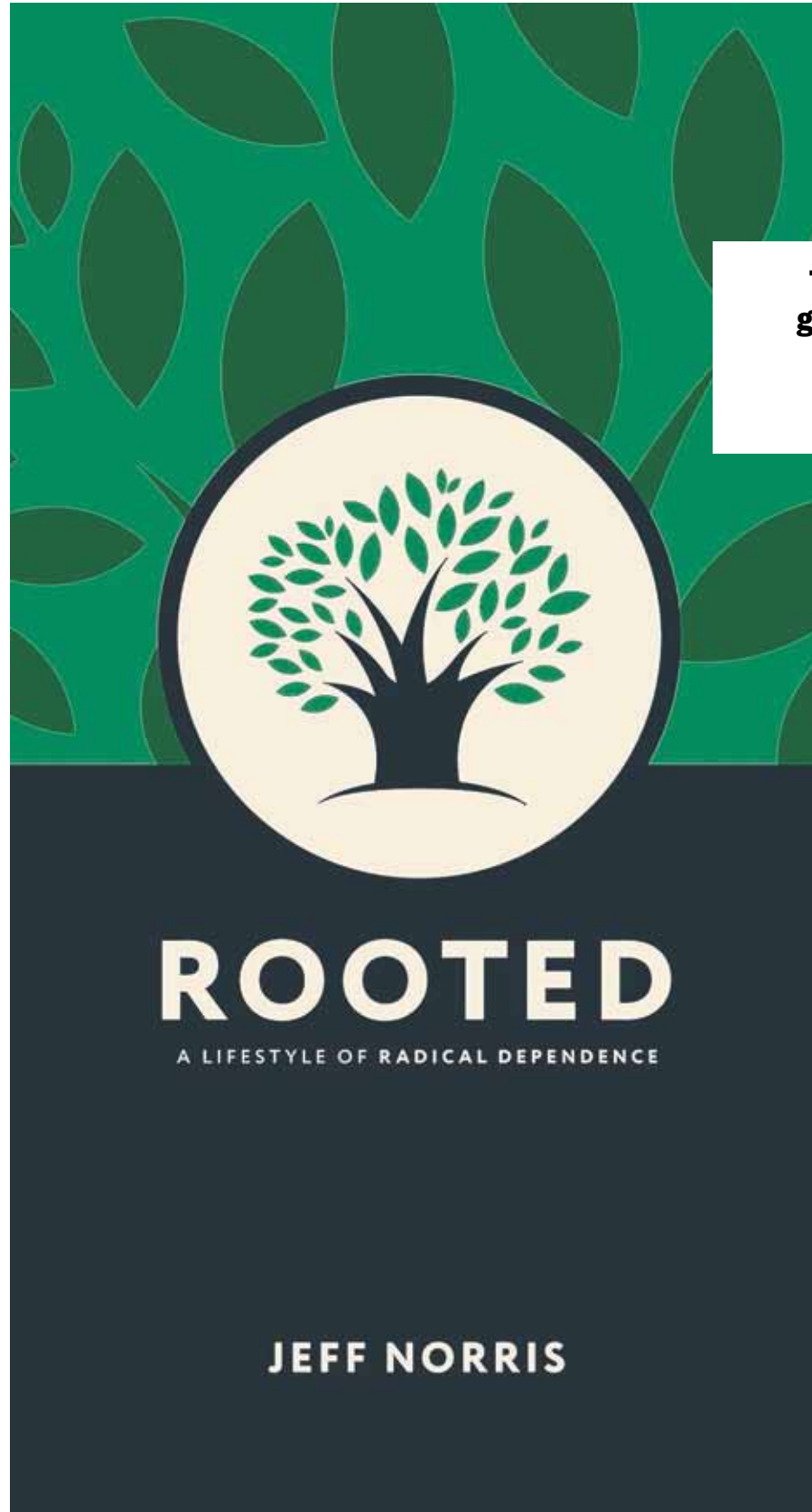
Pursue the Heart of God

The greatest gift you can give your child is your own personal pursuit of God. What is your rhythm with God? Do you have one? If you don't, my encouragement to you is to establish one. If you don't know where to start, here are three easy rhythms to establish:

1. Devote yourself to 10-15 minutes every morning reading the Bible (Start with working your way through the gospel of John and the Psalms).
2. Devote yourself to five minutes of prayer every morning.
3. Devote yourself to weekly corporate worship at a local church.

The Bible teaches us that apart from Christ we can do nothing (John 15:5); and that, left unto ourselves and our own sinful disposition, we'll produce the fruit of our flesh, which includes selfishness, impatience, and anger.

We need the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) in every area of our lives, including – and perhaps, especially – in parenting. This only comes from pursuing God and abiding in Him such that His heart becomes our heart and His ways



become our ways through His Spirit within us. What your child needs more than anything else is a mom and dad who walk with the Lord.

Pursue the Heart of Your Spouse

The second greatest gift you can give your child is a healthy and strong marriage. In Bobb Biehl's book, "Decade by Decade," he states that the greatest need children ages 0-10 have is that

of security. He goes on to say that the primary questions children of those ages are asking in their hearts is, "Am I loved and am I safe?" And "Do mom and dad love each other?"

Our children are watching us. A significant portion of them feeling safe and secure actually has nothing to do with how we engage with them, but how we engage with each other as spouses.

We also have to be aware of the very

real temptation to sacrifice healthy marital rhythms on the altar of our child's happiness. If we're not careful and intentional, our lives as parents will become solely focused on our children to the point that our marital intimacy, connection, and friendship will suffer.

Of course, we want our children to

The greatest gift you can give your child is your own personal pursuit of God.

be happy, but when we become fixated on their happiness more than their development, then we're swimming in dangerous waters. Part of their healthy development is watching mom and dad pursue each other and model before them a godly and healthy marriage.

Pursue the Heart of Your Child

It's easier to control the behavior of your child than it is to engage the motivations of their heart.

Although that's true, it doesn't have to be as hard as we often fear that it is. Sometimes it's as simple as changing the questions we ask. Instead of asking "How was your day?" ask "What is something that happened today that brought you joy?" Instead of asking "Why did you take that toy?" ask "What were you feeling when you took that toy?"

Questions like these are ones that spark heart-level conversations rather than one-word answers. You will sometimes be amazed at what your child will tell you when you're a bit more intentional with the questions you ask them.

Last, but certainly not least, it's impossible to pursue your child's heart when staring at a screen. Put the phone or tablet down!

.....
Jeff Norris is Senior Pastor of Perimeter Church in Duluth, Georgia. He is a graduate of the University of Alabama and Metro Atlanta Seminary. Mr. Norris was on staff with Cru (formerly Campus Crusade for Christ) for 13 years where he served at Southern Miss (2002-2004), University of Georgia (2004-2008), and back at the University of Alabama as the campus director (2008-2015). While in Tuscaloosa, he was able to see the Lord grow the Cru ministry from 50 to over 500 students. His heart and passion then and now is to see the Lord birth and grow communities of people who have been transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ. Mr. Norris is the author of "Rooted: A Lifestyle of Radical Dependence." He and his wife, Rachel, have been married since 2001 and have four children: Samuel, Ellie Kate, Abigail, and Annie.

Experiencing God in the family



By Richard Blackaby

Young adults are currently leaving the church at an alarming rate. Parents are troubled that after rearing their children in the church for 18 years, one semester in university could make them question or abandon their childhood faith.

Every generation bears the crucial responsibility of passing on their values and beliefs to the next generation.

Churches respond to this challenge in diverse ways. Some hold onto the methods they have always used, desperately hoping they will eventually achieve different results. Others hire trendy youth pastors to run cutting-edge programs. They design rooms or entire buildings dedicated to attracting teenagers.

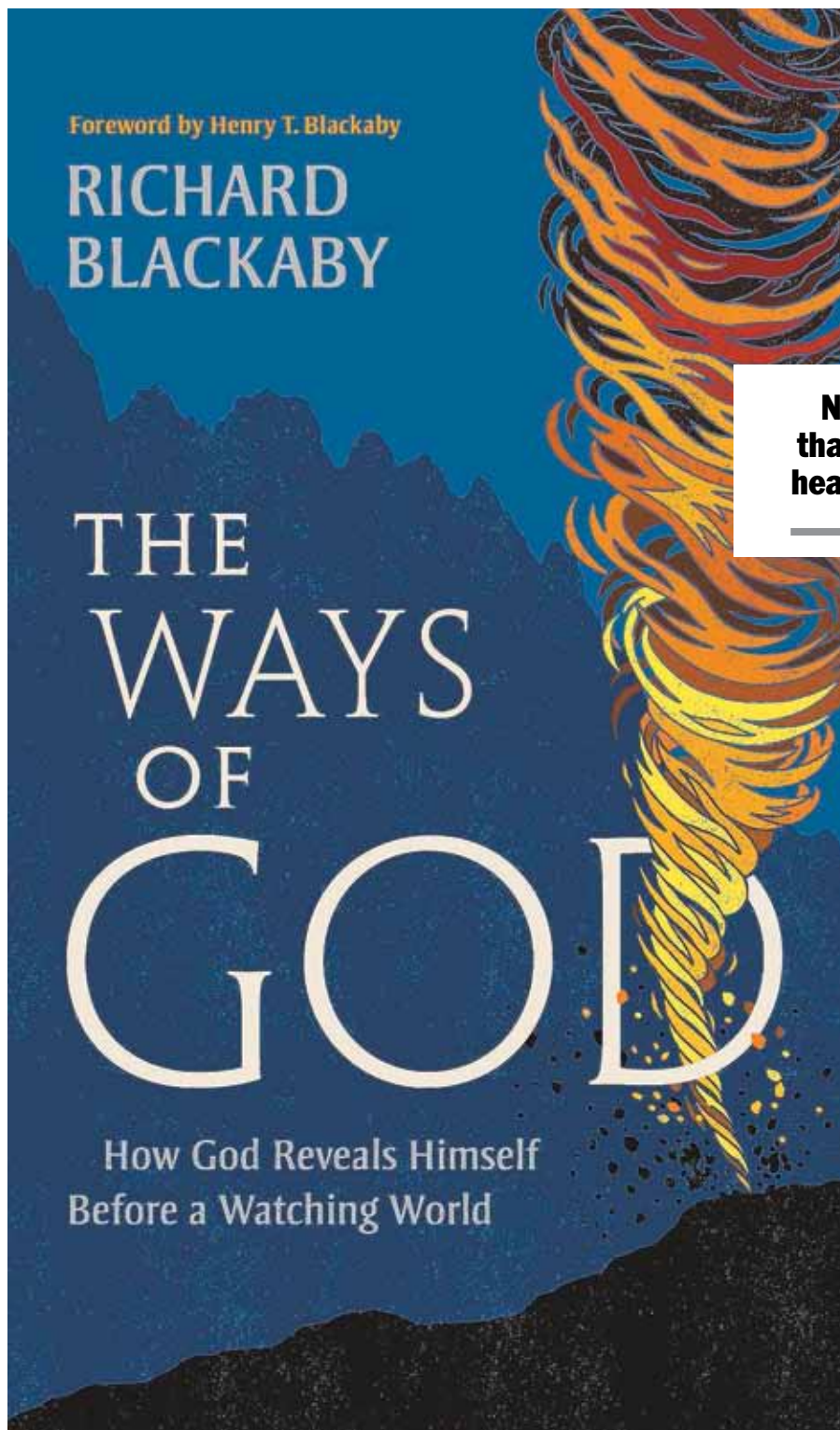
There is a plethora of evangelists and apologists who stimulate teenagers with robust, entertaining theological debate. The contemporary Christian music industry steadily cranks out catchy tunes to engage Christian youth. Yet, despite these valiant efforts, teenagers and college students continue to leave the church in droves.

I grew up without the benefit of a designated youth ministry. Our music was anything but cutting edge. Yet my four siblings and I all grew up to love God and His church. All five of us entered full-time Christian ministry from which none have ever departed. All three of my children graduated from seminary and serve in Christian ministry.

While my personal experience does not reflect that of many Christian families, let me share what I observed while growing up in a Christian home.

1. *The greatest apologetic is experiencing God.*

My parents did not merely tell us



about God. They helped us experience him. We didn't simply attend services; we encountered God. We were taught that God is a person who loves us and wants to be fully engaged in our lives. We were encouraged to open our hearts and minds to Christ and to expect him to engage with us.

2. *Experiencing God must be modeled.*

You cannot give to others what you don't have yourself. My parents not only

urged us to pray and read our Bible, but they modeled that behavior for us. No matter how early I rose in the morning, I invariably found my father sitting in his living room chair with his Bible in his lap, a pen and notepad in his hand, and tears in his eyes. His face would glow as he told me in hushed tones what God had revealed to him that morning.

3. *Joy, not rules, is the currency of vibrant Christian homes.*

Many Christian parents are so afraid their children will lose their faith that they surround them with rules and curfews to quarantine them from the evils lurking in the world around them. Sadly, this approach often drives children away from a legalistic, rules-based religion. My home, though far from perfect, was filled with laughter. My parents rightly reasoned that children could rebel against a rule, but why would they resist the joy of the Lord?

Nothing is more rewarding than pouring your life into the heavenly gift that is your child.

4. *Aim to release your child to God.*

Some parents train their children to be dependent on them. We ought to encourage youth to depend on God. There were many times when I asked my dad for advice about a decision I was facing. Inevitably, he would ask, "What do you sense God wants you to do?" At the time, I found that response frustrating. I wanted a straightforward answer! Dad later explained that he did not want to teach me to come to him for answers. After all, God was far wiser than he was. Furthermore, Dad might not always be around, but God would. My parents avoided playing a role that is reserved for God. They continually pointed me back to him.

5. *Don't just rear your children, enjoy them!*

This lesson might be the most important one I learned as a parent. Christian parents typically take their responsibility to nurture their children seriously. But in the process, it can become a burdensome task. Nothing is more rewarding than pouring your life into the heavenly gift that is your child. Never forget that.

At the end of your life, you won't have been a successful parent if you passed on an inheritance to your children but not a spiritual legacy. Don't just leave your kids your house and savings account. Leave them your faith.

Richard Blackaby, Ph.D., is president of Blackaby Ministries International. He has written or co-authored 35 books, including "Experiencing God," "The Ways of God," and "Rebellious Parenting: Daring the Break the Rules So Your Child Can Thrive."

Higher Ground

Light in a Chaotic World

An Open Letter to Families of Faith



Christopher Dolan

Today almost every major news outlet has embraced a post-truth perspective. Big Tech limits the reach of faith-based causes and issues. The only time you will find a major story about faith in the news is when it involves scandal.

America's families of faith deserve better.

That's why I am excited to introduce you to Higher Ground, a news resource dedicated to helping Christian families navigate today's chaotic landscape.

Higher Ground, powered by the award-winning staff of The Washington Times, is committed to providing rigorous reporting, commentary, and analysis on national, global, and cultural issues through the lens of faith. We understand the challenges you face and believe in the importance of staying informed while upholding the values that have shaped our great nation: freedom, faith, and family.

We encourage you to visit our website — highergroundtimes.com — to find stories from The Washington Times covering faith-based issues you won't find anywhere else.

A major initiative of Higher Ground is a series of online conversations with faith leaders. Our first event, a Q&A with Christian author Billy Hallowell and Washington Times columnist Dr. Everett Piper, covered back to school challenges for families of faith. You can watch a recap of this timely, important conversation on highergroundtimes.com.

These conversations are a great resource for small group Bible studies to help prompt meaningful discussions, share perspectives, and strengthen the bonds within your community.

Our goal is to make Higher Ground a source of encouragement and insight in these uncertain times, helping you make informed decisions about the world around you.

Please sign up for weekly email updates and follow us on Facebook to be the first to know about future events, articles, videos, and podcasts that will continue to inspire and inform you and your family.

Join us on this journey to seek higher ground, where faith and news converge.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Dolan', written in a cursive style.

Christopher Dolan
President and Executive Editor
The Washington Times / Higher Ground
highergroundtimes.com

NEWS FOR FAITHFUL FAMILIES

While most news sources focus exclusively on the “chaotic” news, Higher Ground exists to showcase the “light” in the world.

Higher Ground helps families navigate a chaotic world by providing:

- ✓ Content for parents who are worried about their children’s faith formation
- ✓ A refuge online for families
- ✓ And quality content to engage the Bible through digital technology



Scan to learn more
about Higher Ground

Higher Ground

Light in a Chaotic World

Powered by **The Washington Times**

highergroundtimes.com

VICTORIOUS FAMILY RESOURCES



Family Transformation starts at home

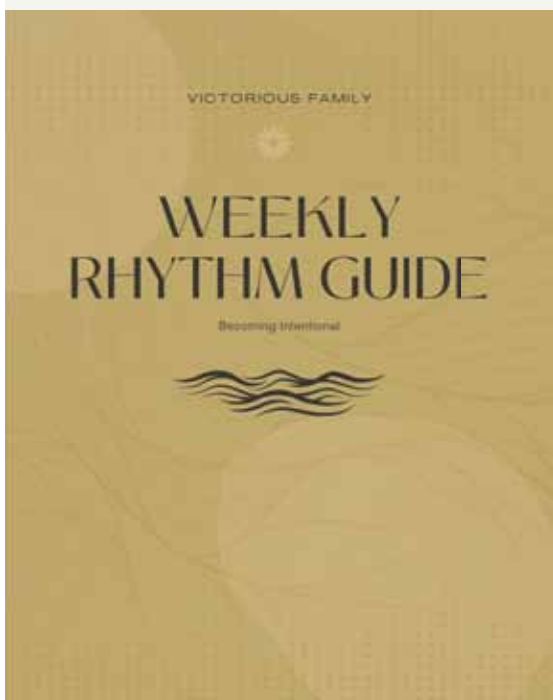
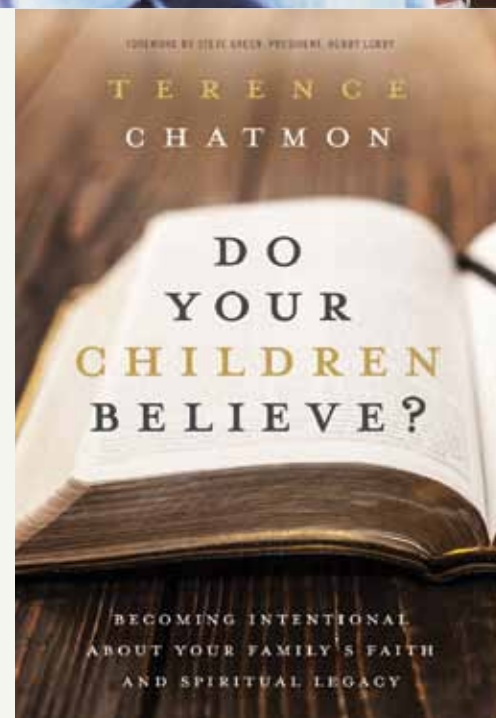
Equipping a generation



VICTORIOUS FAMILY CHRISTMAS SALE!

Save **Big** up to 40% off on our Special Edition Christmas Sale! Equip the next generation of believers with confidence!

SHOP NOW!



“

We must embark on a new course to raise our children in the Lord.

TERENCE CHATMON



Visit us at www.victoriousfamily.org

Bundle & Save!