

7. The Biblical Foundation for Growth in Knowledge

In Exodus 18:19-21, Moses was given five priorities for spiritual leadership. Those verses say, “Listen now to my voice; I will give you counsel, and God will be with you: Stand before God for the people, so that you may bring the difficulties to God. And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do. Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.” These five priorities for Moses also give us five priorities for our lives as parents. As we apply these five priorities to our lives as parents, we see that we are to:

- Pray for our children
- Teach our children the Word of God
- Show our children the way to walk
- Show our children how to work for the Lord
- Share the work with our children

In our last topic, we talked about the first of these five priorities, “The Biblical Foundation for Praying for Our Children.” Today, we will be talking about the second of these priorities. We want to help our children grow in their knowledge of Christ and of His Word. 2 Peter 3:18 says, “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.” We want to focus on Biblical principles that will help our children grow in grace and the principles that will help them grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Peter gave us some key principles for this growth in 2 Peter 1:2-8.

2 Peter 1:2 says, “Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.” In this verse, we see that grace and peace will be multiplied in the lives of our children as they grow in their knowledge of what the Word of God teaches about the Father and what it teaches about Christ. This means that the foundation for helping our children grow in knowledge is to teach them what the Bible says about the Father and what it says about Christ. This means that our goal will be to help them become familiar with the entire Word of God. The only way we can help our children become familiar with the whole Word of God is to become familiar with it ourselves so that we can teach them the Word both by our words and by our example.

2 Peter 1:3 says, “As His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue.” This verse gives us some key principles for the spiritual growth of ourselves and our children. We see that the source of all learning is the divine power of Christ. 1 Corinthians 2:13-14 says, “These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” We cannot help our children grow in the knowledge of Christ by human wisdom. Instead, we must be taught by the Holy Spirit so that we can compare spiritual things with spiritual. We will only be able to understand the things that pertain to life and godliness as we let the Holy Spirit teach us.

A second thing that we see is that Christ has given us the full knowledge about how to have spiritual life and how to grow in godliness in His Word. We want to teach our children from the earliest age what the Bible teaches them about the way to have eternal life through repentance from sin and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Once they place their trust in Christ we want to continue to teach them so that they will learn how to grow in godliness. This teaching about growth in godliness is taught by example as we grow in godliness in our own lives. In addition to providing an example, we also teach our children what the Word of God says about growing in godliness.

A third thing we see, in 2 Peter 1:3, is that Christ gives us a goal for our teaching. We want to show and teach our children that Christ has called us to a life of glory and virtue. Christ gave us the example by His own life of what He wants us to become. It should be our goal to bring glory to Christ by the life that we live. That way we provide our children with an example so that they see how their lives can bring glory to Christ. The word that is translated “virtue” means *moral goodness or moral excellence*. Here, we see that we help our children learn to bring glory to Christ by living a life of moral excellence.

2 Peter 1:4 says, “By which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” Here, we see that Christ has given us promises that are exceedingly great and very precious. At the moment of spiritual birth, we were made new creations. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” We want to help our children grow in their understanding of what it means to be a new creation. We help them to understand that they have now been given the divine nature or new nature and Galatians 2:20 says that Christ now lives in them.

The fact that Christ now lives in them also means that they have been set free from the bondage of Satan and sin. Hebrews 2:14-15 says, “Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” When our children put their trust in Christ we want to help them understand that they have been set free from the bondage of Satan. This now gives them the freedom to serve others in love. Galatians 5:13 says, “For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”

2 Peter 1:5-7 says, “But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.” Here, the Lord gives us a list of key areas where we want to help our children develop. We see that we want them to develop in the areas of:

- Faith – God gave us our faith as a gift – Ephesians 2:8-9
- Virtue – moral goodness or moral excellence – 2 Peter 1:3
- Knowledge – understanding of the Word through study – 2 Timothy 2:15
- Self-control – one who exercises control over sinful desires – Galatians 5:23
- Perseverance – endurance and patience in doing what is right – Hebrews 10:36

Growing Godly Family Series – Developing the Biblical Foundation for a Godly Marriage 7. “The Biblical Foundation for Growth in Knowledge”

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- Godliness – living in obedience to God – James 1:22
 - Brotherly kindness – loving one another as God has loved us – 1 Thessalonians 4:9
 - Love – we are to love others as Christ loved us – John 13:34-35
- We will only help our children grow in these areas as we model these things by our own behavior.

2 Peter 1:8 says, “For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” If we are helping our children to develop the things that are listed in the previous verses, God says that they will not be barren or unfruitful in their knowledge of Christ. That is why we want these things to abound in our lives so that our children will be able to have an example to follow so that these things develop in their lives. 1 Corinthians 11:1 says, “Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.” As we imitate Christ in our own lives, our children will see how to imitate Christ in their lives.

In addition to helping our children grow in Christ, we also want to help them grow in their knowledge of the Word of God. This involves more than just hearing or reading the Word of God. 2 Timothy 2:15 tells us that we need to show our children how to study the Word of God. That verse says, “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” Then, Psalm 119:9-11 says that we want to help them memorize the Word of God because God says that will help to keep our children from sin. Those verses say, “How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You!” As we memorize the Word of God with our children, we learn together how to avoid sin.

A final key for helping our children grow in the knowledge of the Word of God is showing them how to meditate on the Word of God. Joshua 1:8 says, “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.” As we help our children learn to understand how we meditate on the Word of God throughout the day, they will also be learning to meditate. Psalm 1:1-3 gives some great promises about the results of effective meditation when it says, “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.” May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children grow in the knowledge of Christ and His Word.