



*Discipleship
from
Ages 0-18*

MINISTRY OVERVIEW &
PARENT PARTNERSHIP PLAN



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A THEOLOGICAL VISION

Who is responsible for nurturing, training, and teaching children?

The Scriptures are clear that **parents**, before any other group or person, are to be the primary shapers and disciple-makers of their children (Deuteronomy 6:4-6; Ephesians 6:1-4). Our approach to kids' ministry and student ministry at Coram Deo flows from this conviction. If you are a parent, **you** are called by God to be the primary spiritual influence in your child's life. We are called by God to come alongside you and equip you for that task. That's why we've created this resource. So: whether you're raising your own children or helping the parents around you raise theirs, this resource is intended to give you a fuller vision for the discipleship of children and students.

Faithful Christian parenting involves both **trust** and **obedience**. Christians are to **trust** the Lord in their parenting: "But I trust in you, O Lord... my times are in your hand" (Psalm 31:14-15). And Christians are to **obey** the Lord in raising their children: "These words that I command you today shall be on your heart... you shall teach them diligently to your children" (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).

Part of how we **trust and obey** God is by teaching theological and biblical truths to children. Such instruction shapes their understanding of God and lays the foundation for moral character, spiritual formation, and deep understanding of the gospel. Proverbs 22:6 emphasizes the significance of early instruction: "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old, he will not depart from it."

As we work together to faithfully teach children about God and his Word, here are four theological truths that should undergird our efforts:

Promise: Just as God's covenant extended to Abraham's descendants (Genesis 17:7), God's covenant promises are meant for our children. So we work to impart the truths of Scripture, cultivating a legacy of faithfulness in each successive generation (Psalm 78:4-7). He who promised is faithful (Hebrews 10:23); he has begun a good work in us, and he will bring it to completion (Philippians 1:6).

Providence: God's guiding hand orchestrates every facet of life; in fact, Scripture teaches that God has known and loved our child(ren) before we even met them (Jeremiah 1:1; Psalm 139:13-18). This theological truth should propel you to nurture the spiritual lives of children with confidence in his divine plan, understanding that he is actively shaping their journey.

Presence: Throughout Scripture, God promises his abiding presence among his people (see, for example, Isaiah 43:2; Haggai 2:4-5; Hebrews 13:5). You are not alone! Resting in God's presence fosters a sense of humility and peace, aiding parents in navigating the complexities of nurturing young hearts and minds. Through prayerful reliance on the Holy Spirit, you will experience the patience, love, and discernment necessary for effective guidance.

Progress, not Perfection: The goal of the Christian life is to “press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14). We want our children to continually progress toward greater trust and obedience. And we want them to see that obedience is not a burden (1 John 5:3), but a natural outflow of gratitude for God's undeserved favor. May God's grace and the good news of the gospel compel our children to make progress in following Christ and walking in his ways.

The mission of Coram Deo Church is **to worship God, make disciples, plant churches, and spur gospel renewal everywhere**. As we engage in that mission by teaching children to worship God and to be his disciples, God uses **them** to grow **us** as disciples and renew **our** hope in the gospel! Discipling children and students isn't just about **their** growth and development; it's about **ours** as well. As we invest together in the spiritual formation of children and students, we participate in God's promised renewal of all things. Let's work heartily, as unto the Lord (Colossians 3:23). To him be the glory.



**PART ONE:
STAGES OF DISCIPLESHIP**

Discipling a 3-year-old is different than discipling a 13-year-old.

In this section, we survey the ages and stages of a child's life, noting key discipleship milestones.

We also explain the basic procedures and practices for Coram Deo Kids and Student Ministry along the way.

OUR METHODS

Coram Deo Church exists to **worship God, make disciples, plant churches, and spur gospel renewal everywhere**. This mission begins in our own households. If we aren't worshipping and honoring God in our own families, what credibility do we have to proclaim the gospel to others (Isaiah 29:13-14)?

Scripture teaches that *parents ought to be the primary disciple-makers of their children* (see Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Proverbs 17:21; Ephesians 6:4). The local church is to assist and encourage parents in this work. At Coram Deo, we aim to do this using four specific methods:

- **Teaching** children deep truths about God and his gospel (not just Bible stories or moral lessons)
- **Immersing** children in a gospel-rich environment that fosters relationships with peers and parents
- **Instructing** children using age-appropriate methods
- **Resourcing** parents as they seek to teach and train their children

OUR MILESTONES

As we envision someone progressing from infancy to adulthood in our church, we want to “officially” mark **four key spiritual milestones** in that person's life.

- **Parent/Child Dedication:** We invite parents who are church members to present new children for dedication to the Lord during a Sunday morning worship service.
- **Baptism:** Around the age of 12, when a child has made a credible profession of faith, we encourage them toward Christian baptism.
- **Catechism Retreat:** As children enter student ministry (6th grade), we invite parents and children to a weekend retreat to cast a vision for the next season of life.
- **Senior Dinner:** Graduating high school seniors are honored and recognized at our annual Senior Dinner.

INFANTS & TODDLERS

In this stage of childhood, children are learning how to interact with the world and with other people. This stage is crucial for developing stable bonds with parents, siblings, and caregivers.

DEVELOPMENT:

COGNITIVE	PHYSICAL	SOCIAL	SPIRITUAL
Develop language	Begin walking	Respond to music and singing	Should be talked to often about God and Jesus
Start to learn how to interact with the world	Desire to be held and bonded with	Enjoy being talked to	Should be prayed over so they learn the language of prayer

Coram Deo's goal for infants and toddlers is to create a safe environment where kids feel welcomed and cared for. We pray a simple prayer over each child every time they are in the classroom.

CONTENT:

WORSHIP	STORYTIME	SCRIPTURE WORK	PRAYER
Worship music is played throughout the morning	Books are age-appropriate and Bible-based	The classroom artwork has Bible verses displayed	Each child is prayed for as they are held by one of our volunteers

CURRICULUM:

- At this age, kids learn through repetition, therefore everything that is taught and sung will involve a lot of repetition and movement.
- Starting in the toddler rooms, we provide four lessons that are rotated so that each lesson is taught three times a year following the basic gospel story throughout Scripture: creation, the fall, Jesus' coming, and Jesus' coming again.
- By the time the kids leave the toddler rooms, we want them to be able to know simple core phrases about biblical truths.

TWOS & THREES

In these years, children learn a language, start to express themselves, and begin to exert their will. Their selfishness and sinfulness will be on full display! But their individuality and personality will also start to develop as they explore their agency in the world.

DEVELOPMENT:

COGNITIVE	PHYSICAL	SOCIAL	SPIRITUAL
Learn to process information	Learn to run and jump	Learn self-expression	Need repetition about who God is
Begin organizing items and information	Hand-eye coordination develops	Enjoy lots of play	Explain that prayer is how we talk to God
Form baseline understanding of the world around them	Become potty trained	Like imaginative building	Learning to be aware and comfortable with people and God

During this stage in development, Coram Deo introduces a simple curriculum to begin teaching children about the Lord. We spend a couple of minutes of class time teaching and then sing a few songs.

CONTENT:

WORSHIP	STORYTIME	SCRIPTURE WORK	PRAYER
Worship songs are sung together using simple songs and repetition	A simple story is taught with large pictures	A set of foundational phrases are taught with an emphasis on repetition	During free play time, teachers pray silently over each child
Worship is also a time for movement and actions along with the songs	A coloring sheet is provided to reinforce elements of the story	A take-home sheet references the verse taught in class	A simple prayer is incorporated into the lesson and snack time

CURRICULUM:

- At this age, kids learn through repetition, therefore everything that is taught and sung will involve a lot of repetition and movement.
- In the Twos room, the curriculum changes every other week, so the kids may be familiar with the lesson already. This repetition is helping the kids to recall and remember what they are learning.
- Worship time is upbeat and involves lots of hand motions and movement. Kids this age love hearing the music and dancing with shakers or learning different motions for the songs.
- Parents should make use of the take-home coloring sheet to spur conversation and reinforce the Bible lesson learned that week.

PRESCHOOL (AGES 4 & 5)

At this stage, children are natural learners and are constantly taking in information. Their understanding is still immature and childish, but they are fascinated by stories and have a surprising ability to remember details.

DEVELOPMENT:

COGNITIVE	PHYSICAL	SOCIAL	SPIRITUAL
Better understanding of time	Become well-coordinated	More interested in peers than before	Tend to understand sin as “breaking the rules”
Attention span is between 5-10 minutes	Very active	Crave attention from adults	Tend to understand the Bible as “God’s special rules”
Memories are becoming stronger, which means they often remember surprising details	Easily over-stimulated; may take extra time to settle down	Respond well to public praise	Tend to know the very basics of Jesus’ life and death

During the preschool years, Coram Deo introduces storytellers: adult volunteers who narrate the Bible story for the morning. This means children are listening to the curriculum being taught, participating in singing as a group, and walking in a line with their classmates. Our goal in the preschool age is to begin teaching children how to interact with peers and respect others.

CONTENT:

WORSHIP	STORYTIME	SCRIPTURE WORK	PRAYER
Worship songs are sung together using simple songs and repetition	The lesson and story are taught by an engaging storyteller	A simple verse is introduced and practiced through fun games and repetition	Prayer is modeled by the teachers during the lesson and snack times
Worship is also a time for movement and actions along with the songs	The lessons walk through Bible stories, teaching key points, and relating them back to the gospel	At this age, we work to learn what the verse means and connect it to pictures to help with memorization	Praying out loud is encouraged if a child feels comfortable

CURRICULUM:

- Worship time is upbeat and involves lots of hand motions and movement. Kids are led by a teacher at the front of the room and encouraged to sing along.
- Parents should make use of the take-home coloring sheet to spur conversation and reinforce the Bible lesson learned that week.
- Using the poster provided, volunteers recite the **Scripture memory verse** several times with the kids. We also encourage playful recitation: using the “dice” to help them recite it in fun ways; saying the verse like a dinosaur; saying it while hopping in place; etc. The goal is to help the kids memorize the verse while having fun.
- Volunteers also help the kids understand what the verse means and how it can help them learn more about God. Pictures help them remember and associate the words they can’t read with what they are learning.

ELEMENTARY (KINDERGARTEN–3RD GRADE)

In this stage, children are learning to read, write, and think. They are natural imitators, looking for role models to emulate. They seek affirmation and enjoy being called on to help or contribute. They should also be growing in self-control.

DEVELOPMENT:

COGNITIVE	PHYSICAL	SOCIAL	SPIRITUAL
Expand their world through reading	Grow at a slightly slower rate	Thrive with public praise	Profit from spiritually mature examples
Crave affection/guidance	Have sudden bursts of energy	Imitate adults and need their approval	Can see God’s love and forgiveness
Are imaginative, rational, critical thinkers	Are losing teeth frequently	Like peers, siblings, and pets	Learn reverence by example and practice
Learn through senses, experiences, words	Love varied, hands-on activities	Choose (and change) friends often	Can learn to pray to and live for Jesus. Are willing to tell God anything
Can be rebellious; like to pretend and role play	Are tactile learners	Love to be a teacher’s “helper” or “assistant”	May begin to understand the Trinity

Coram Deo's approach to Elementary discipleship (Kindergarten-3rd grade) focuses on memory work, reading along in the Bible, corporate singing, and working through the lesson together using a question-and-answer format. We want to begin teaching students to study the Scriptures and grow in a deeper understanding of Christ.

CONTENT:

WORSHIP	STORYTIME	SCRIPTURE WORK	PRAYER
Worship through singing, led by a worship team to mimic worship time in service	The lesson and story are taught through an engaging storyteller	Learn a new memory verse each month through repetition, games, singing, and teaching	Prayer is modeled by the worship team and storyteller
A simple liturgy is incorporated during this time	The lessons walk through Bible stories, teaching key points and relating them back to the gospel	Learn what the verse means and how to find the verse in a Bible	Prayer is talked about in the lessons and practiced in the small group classes

CURRICULUM:

- Worship is led by specific, talented musicians. We want children to start experiencing guided worship time, so they are prepared for Sunday service with their family.
- Storytime is led by specific, talented teachers. The teachers prepare a lesson to share from the front of the room that is engaging and age-appropriate.
- **Scripture Memory:** At the elementary age, we want our children to begin memorizing Scripture. We do this through recitation, song, and repetition. By hearing, singing, and talking about a specific passage of Scripture, we hope the children will not only commit the Scripture to memory, but understand the truth it is teaching.
- Our process is to recite the verses with the kids; break down tricky words; and teach through the passage. Then we challenge kids to try to memorize a few easier phrases. Together, we'll see if anyone can remember the harder parts of the passage, or if anyone can explain what the passage means.
- By the end of our time together, the kids should be able to recite the passage and talk about what it means.

CATECHISM (4TH & 5TH GRADE)

*In these years, children are moving quickly toward adolescence. This is a key time to establish the foundations of the Christian faith, helping them understand not only **what** Christians believe, but **why** we believe it.*

DEVELOPMENT:

COGNITIVE	PHYSICAL	SOCIAL	SPIRITUAL
Are eager for information	Very active, strong, excited	Can be encouraged to have high standards	Can make a genuine commitment to Christ
Have good memorization skills, can locate passages in the Bible	Growing independence	Have a keen sense of justice	Respond to teaching on discipleship, growth in Christ, and growing understanding of sin
Can judge their own work critically	Gain more control of body and space	Like to participate in groups/classes	Need encouragement to have a daily devotional
Develop concepts of time and space	Love teams and competition	Feel loyalty to groups they belong to	Need strong, practical examples of how to study

CONTENT AND CURRICULUM: CATECHISM CLASS

- The Catechism class meets every other week to work through *The New City Catechism*. Our goal is to build a systematic, cohesive understanding of the Christian faith.
- Students participate in the main worship service with the adults each week before being dismissed to the classroom. This helps them grow in a more mature experience of Christian worship.
- In the Catechism Class, adults teach through each catechism question/answer, sharing biblical truth along the way and using games to aid in learning.
- Each week, the student learns a new verse to memorize. We encourage students to work on the memory verse at home and share it with each other.
- Prayer is modeled by the teacher as they begin each lesson and as they close out their time together. As the lessons progress, the students receive a prayer journal to begin independently writing prayers to the Lord.

STUDENT MINISTRY (MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL)

VISION AND PURPOSE

The Coram Deo Student Ministry exists to help middle and high school students grow deep theological roots, cultivate Christlikeness, and grow to maturity in their faith. Student Ministry is also a context where non-Christian students can make friends and make sense of God.

HOW DO WE DO IT?

1. Weekly Student Ministry Gatherings
2. Rite of Passages Experiences - Catechism Retreat, Senior Dinner, etc.
3. Student Discipleship Meetings and Small Group Studies
4. Parent Equipping Nights
5. Student Leader Cohorts

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

We are successful when every student:

1. Displays **spiritual vitality** through conversion to Christ and personal communion with the Lord
2. Experiences **spiritual formation** - growing in godliness and Christ-likeness
3. Develops a thoroughly **Christian worldview** by which they learn to see the world the way God does
4. Becomes **spiritually integrated** - living for the Lord and relating to one another in heart, mind, body, and soul
5. Enjoys **meaningful friendships** with Christians and non-Christians
6. Practices **generous stewardship** - understanding that all they are and have belong to God
7. Has a working **apologetic framework** by which to engage secular worldviews in a thoughtful and persuasive way
8. Possesses a **kingdom vision** for their life

DISTINCTIVES

What makes Coram Deo Student Ministry unique?

1. **Process vs. Event.** For years, youth ministries across the country have dedicated much of their time and attention to big celebrations and evangelistic gatherings. We are dedicated instead to the slow, day-to-day process of relational discipleship that results in meaningful life change over time.
2. **Discipleship vs. Conversion.** Many youth ministries have placed a strong emphasis on conversion. An initial profession of faith and baptism are the primary focal points. While those things are essential, they are not the complete picture of discipleship. We want to celebrate, affirm, and call for such things, while focusing our attention on the lifelong process of discipleship - which happens before, during, and after conversion.
3. **Supplement vs. Replacement.** Student ministry leaders are not a replacement for parents! We believe parents should be the primary spiritual influencers in the lives of their children. We seek to come alongside parents in their efforts to disciple their own children.



APPENDIX 1: SAFETY

Ensuring a safe environment is crucial to our mission. We observe the following policies for the safety and security of all children and volunteers:

- All potential volunteers must submit to a criminal background check. Anyone convicted of child abuse, or a related offense is not permitted to serve in Coram Deo Kids.
- All rooms are staffed by a team of two or more adults, including at least one female.
- Only family members may retrieve children from the Coram Deo Kids area. Parents must present the appropriate claim ticket before their child will be released. If no claim ticket is available, a Coram Deo Kids staff member must verify the family member's identity.
- No one may take pictures of children while in Coram Deo Kids. Cell phones may be used for emergencies only.
- Adults may not allow children older than 3 to sit on their laps.

IF PARENTAL ABUSE OR NEGLECT IS SUSPECTED

In cases of suspected parental abuse or neglect, staff and volunteers of Coram Deo Kids will immediately notify the Coram Deo Kids Coordinator and will comply with all Nebraska laws regarding child abuse reporting. This includes contacting the Department of Health and Human Services, a law enforcement agency, or the state's 24-hour toll-free hotline.

DISCIPLINE POLICIES

For our children to learn best and grow in the gospel, we seek to have a stable classroom environment where children learn to respond well to loving authority.

Preventative Actions

- Create a loving, caring environment
- Consistently communicate expectations
- Focus on positive behavior
- Be fair and consistent

Classroom Rules

“We respect God and others by:”

- Obeying the teacher
- Listening
- Being kind
- Being safe
- Keeping hands and feet to yourself

Corrective Actions for Consistent Misbehavior

- Redirection and remind them of the rules
- Pull child aside and remind them of the rule broken
- Call the child’s parents

Informing Parents

Since our goal is to assist parents in the effective training and instruction of their children, we encourage teachers to talk with parents about any consistent behavioral problems we might be experiencing with their child. Our hope in this communication is not to shame parents, but to help equip them in understanding their child and teaching the gospel to them.

Aggressive Behavior

Biting, hitting, pushing, scratching, or pulling are considered aggressive behaviors and will be addressed promptly. If a child displays any of these behaviors, Coram Deo Kids staff will be informed and the child may be removed from the classroom.



APPENDIX 2: CLASSROOM PROCEDURES & POLICIES

CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

Parents will check in children and get nametags from one of the Coram Deo Kids check-in stations. Children will not be allowed to enter the classroom without a nametag. The check-in system will monitor class numbers and close classes when they are full.

Check-in/check-out procedures:

- Two adult volunteers must be present before a child can be checked into a classroom.
- Adults welcome each child by name.
- An adult will write the alphanumeric code from the nametag on the attendance sheet.
- When parents arrive, classroom volunteers match the claim ticket with the alphanumeric code on their child's nametag. They'll mark the number off from the attendance sheet with an X and remove the child's nametag. If a parent loses their claim ticket, they need to reprint a claim ticket at the check-in station or be verified by a member of the Coram Deo Kids staff team.

The attendance clipboard is placed by the door in the classroom after each service. If the class leaves the room, they take the clipboard and walkie-talkie with them.

CONTACTING PARENTS

If a parent is needed during the service, classroom leaders will use radios to inform Coram Deo Kids staff. The code will be displayed on the screens in the service for the parents to respond to.

WELL CHILD POLICY

If a child can be described by any of the following, we request that they are not placed in a Coram Deo Kids classroom:

- He/she has a body temperature of 100+ degrees
- He/she is vomiting
- He/she has diarrhea not related to medication or a food reaction
- He/she has an undiagnosed rash
- He/she has a runny nose that is constant or cloudy
- He/she has any yellow or green discharge from the nose or eyes
- He/she has a constant cough not related to allergies
- He/she has a wet cough producing yellow or green discharge
- He/she acts unusually tired, pale, irritable, or restless
- He/she has had a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea in the last 24 hours

RESTROOM AND DIAPER CHANGING PROCEDURES

We encourage parents to change diapers or take their children to the restroom *prior to* checking them into the classroom.

Nursery, Toddler, and Two-Year-Old: Diapers are to be changed by female volunteers while in clear view of other volunteers.

Three-Year-Old, Four-Year-Old, and Preschool: When a child needs to use the restroom, two female volunteers will accompany them. No more than four children are allowed to use the restroom at a time. A volunteer should never be alone in the restroom with a child.

Elementary: When a child needs to use the restroom, one female volunteer checks that the restroom is clear of all people, lets the child into the restroom, then stands outside watching the door until the child comes out. While the child is in the restroom, no other adults are allowed to enter. Volunteers must never go into the restroom alone with a child.



**PART TWO:
PARENTING &
DISCIPLESHIP RESOURCES**

*In this section, we provide parents
with key tools and resources
to help in the spiritual formation
of children and students.*

PARENTING OBJECTIVES

In Tedd Tripp's book *Shepherding a Child's Heart*,¹ he divides the work of child-rearing into three distinct stages: ages 0-5, ages 6-12, and ages 13-18. As we've sought to equip parents for faithful Christian leadership in the home, we've found this simple framework helpful.

Each stage has a specific objective that helps parents "keep their eye on the ball." (The notes below are adapted from Tripp's book, with additional material from Pastor Bob Thune.)

STAGE ONE: AGES 0-5

OBJECTIVE/GOAL: ESTABLISH AUTHORITY

"The most important lesson for the child to learn in this period is that he is an individual under authority. He has been made by God and has a responsibility to obey God in all things."

– Tedd Tripp

It is important that children understand that their obedience is a response to God. Therefore, their submission to earthly authority is a response to being under God's authority.

KEY PASSAGE: Ephesians 6:1-3

"Children, **obey** your parents in the Lord, for this is right. '**Honor** your father and mother,' which is the first commandment with a promise: 'that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on earth.'"

- **Obedience Defined:** "Obedience means a child doing what he is told — without challenge, excuse, or delay. If you accept any other response, you are training your children to disobey."
- **Honoring Defined:** "Honoring parents means to treat them with respect and esteem because of their position of authority."

¹ Tedd Tripp, *Shepherding a Child's Heart* (Shepherd Press, 1995).

KEY TOOL: TRAINING

Remember that children must be **trained** to obey and honor their parents!

Many “discipline issues” in this stage are actually training issues. Rather than simply reacting to disobedience, you need to train children FOR obedience.

- Bedtime/sleep training
- Quiet time training
- Table training (eating, table manners)
- Social training (not interrupting, asking politely, sitting quietly in church, etc.)
- Obedience training (obeying the first time without delay)

These are all ways of honoring parental authority.

A Simple Process for Training:

- Establish a clearly communicated rule/expectation
- Expect obedience
- If disobedience occurs, apply loving discipline
- Restore fellowship
- Over time, teach your children how to “appeal” in a respectful manner

KEY PARENTAL VIRTUE: FAITHFULNESS

Training your children for obedience and honor takes **great consistency**. Consistency is mandated if your children are to learn that God requires obedience. It will require great attention, time, and effort.

SUMMARY

- Be Present: as an authority figure (who’s under God’s authority)
- Instruct: primarily with commands
- Discipline: focusing on obedience

STAGE TWO: AGES 6-12

OBJECTIVE/GOAL: SHAPE CHARACTER

“The big issue during these years is character... You can’t be with [your child] all the time. He must know what to do in situations you cannot anticipate.”

– Tedd Tripp

KEY PASSAGE: Luke 6:45

“The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”

- Children can be obedient and still lack virtue. In this stage, you’re not merely dealing with disobedience; you’re cultivating positive virtue.
- “The alternative to addressing character issues in your children is to structure things around rules. You then produce children who learn to keep the rules... without addressing issues of the heart.” (Tripp, 165-166).

KEY TOOL: SHEPHERDING

“Behavior has a **when**, a **what**, and a **why**. The **when** describes the circumstances in which the behavior occurred. The **what** describes the things that were said or done. The **why** describes the internal heart issues that pushed or pulled the specific behavior. You must explore with your children not just the when or the what of their behavior, but the why” (Tripp, 173).

In this stage, you’re seeking to shepherd your kids toward Christ, helping them draw the lines from **behavior** to **character**. God wants them to become a certain kind of person. That can only happen by his grace, through the radical renovating work of the gospel. They must see their need for Christ’s grace and mercy.

KEY PARENTAL VIRTUE: PATIENCE

Children are, by definition, immature! Shaping character requires a long-term vision for the kind of adult God wants your child to become, and the patience to prayerfully and diligently shepherd them toward that future.

SUMMARY

- Be Present: as a teacher and guide
- Instruct: in virtue and wisdom
- Discipline: focusing on character

STAGE THREE: AGES 13-18

OBJECTIVE/GOAL: IMPART RESPONSIBILITY

- Responsibility for their relationship with God
- Responsibility for their relationships with others
- Responsibility for their life choices (becoming an adult)

KEY PASSAGE: Proverbs 1:7

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

- In this stage, you want to see your children “develop autonomous identities as persons under God” (Tripp, 198). You want your teenager to have a growing apprehension of what it means to be a God-worshipper.
- This is also a time in life when the dissociation from fools is very important.

KEY TOOL: INFLUENCE

“The teenage years are marked with monumental **insecurity**. The youth is neither a child nor an adult, and unsure of how to act... The teen also wants to be his own person. He will need direction but will resist overt attempts to corral him” (Tripp, 185).

Authority vs. Influence: You are seeking to move more toward being an influencer in your child’s life, not simply an authority figure.

KEY PARENTAL VIRTUE: JOY

Teenagers need to experience a home environment that’s joyful and inviting! Life itself creates plenty of anxiety, confusion, and uncertainty in these years; mom and dad don’t need to add to that. Deeper joy in the parent will lead to greater freedom in the household and greater peace in the child.

SUMMARY

- Be Present: as a positive, constructive, godly influence.
- Instruct: by “giving rope”
- Discipline: primarily through consequences

CATECHIZING YOUR CHILDREN

Almost all Christian catechisms are structured around the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Apostles' Creed. And it makes sense: Christian ethics, Christian worship, and Christian doctrine are foundational to discipleship.

As you disciple your children, you should help them memorize The Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Apostles' Creed. Start early! Work on them often! Committing these to memory will pay huge dividends in years to come.

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

Exodus 20:1-17; Deuteronomy 5:1-21

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make for yourself an idol.
3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
5. Honor your father and mother.
6. You shall not murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
10. You shall not covet.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9-13

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever: Amen.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

We believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead;
the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit;
the holy catholic [universal] Church;
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body;
and the life everlasting. Amen.

BIBLE PROGRESSION CHART

The regular reading of Scripture is a major component of discipleship to Jesus. But finding the right resources to engage kids of different ages can be a challenge. Below is our best attempt to help parents decide which Bible is best for their children.

Pre-K	K	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
The Jesus Storybook Bible													
The Gospel Story Bible													
			The Action Bible										
						The Adventure Bible							
										ESV Study Bible			

The Jesus Storybook Bible, published by Zonderkidz, has 44 stories. Each story has multiple illustrations, is written in child-friendly language, and concludes with a gospel connection. We recommend parents read this Bible to their children between ages 3 and 5.

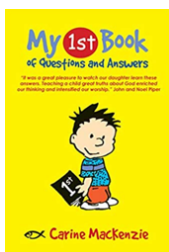
The Gospel Story Bible, published by New Growth Press, has 156 stories. Each story is two pages with an illustration and reflection questions. This Bible is also written in child-friendly language, yet has more scriptural details than *The Jesus Storybook Bible*. The conclusion of each story reveals the gospel connection. We recommend parents read this Bible to their children between kindergarten and third grade.

The Action Bible is an illustrated Bible that is great for young kids. The pictures will help keep kids engaged as they begin to read fuller accounts of Scripture. We recommend reading this Bible alongside your kids to answer any questions they may have.

The Adventure Bible (NIV), published by Zonderkidz, contains helpful study tools to aid young readers. Examples include sidebars with explanations, mini glossaries, graphics, maps, and life applications. Children receive this Bible at the end of second grade. However, we recommend that parents spend up to two years reading this Bible alongside their children until they are proficient readers and can accurately read and comprehend the text.

The ESV Study Bible, published by Crossway, is best for mature readers. It combines evangelical commentary with the ESV translation of the biblical text. It also features valuable study tools such as book introductions, illustrations, maps, timelines, and a glossary.

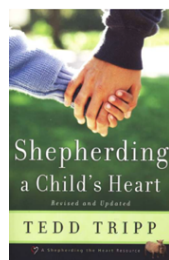
RECOMMENDED RESOURCES



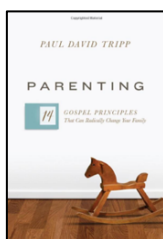
My First Book of Question and Answers by Carine Mackenzie
Children always have questions about what it means to be a Christian. Do they need a long philosophical answer? Not always. If you've ever wanted to know how to explain the Christian faith to young children in bite-sized chunks, then the 114 questions and answers in this little book provide an invaluable tool to get you started.



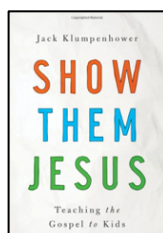
The New City Catechism
The New City Catechism is a modern catechism built on the historic foundation of the Heidelberg and Westminster Catechisms. It's a great resource to help ground your child(ren) in the foundational truths of the Christian faith.



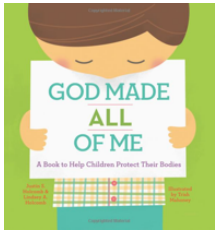
Shepherding a Child's Heart by Tedd Tripp
This classic work on Christian parenting has been a go-to resource at Coram Deo for decades. Tedd Tripp provides perspectives and procedures for shepherding your child's heart into the paths of life. He breaks parenting into three main stages, with focused behavioral and character outcomes in each stage.



Parenting by Paul David Tripp
Outlining 14 foundational principles centered on the gospel, Paul Tripp shows that we need more than the latest parenting strategy or list of techniques. Rather, we need the rescuing grace of God—grace that has the power to shape how we view everything we do as parents.

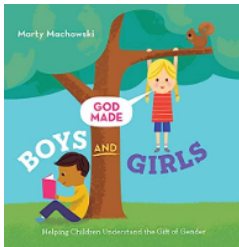


Show Them Jesus: Teaching the Gospel to Kids by Jack Klumpenhouwer
This book provides tangible tools to teach the gospel to children and teens. Every chapter ends with questions to consider as you lead children through a life of faithfulness.



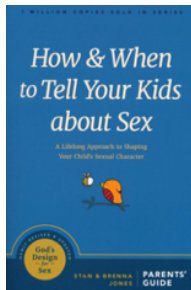
God Made All of Me by Justin and Lindsey Holcomb

This book is a thoughtful and carefully-written resource on why bodies are private and how our bodies should be treated by others. It gives parents an invaluable tool to talk about sensitive issues.



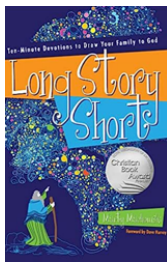
God Made Boys and Girls by Marty Machowski

This book helps children understand that their gender is a gift from the God who made them and loves them. The book reminds kids that God gives each of us the gift of being male or female before we are born and that you continue to be a boy or a girl whether you like to climb trees or play house, play tag or color pictures, cause a ruckus or sit quietly.



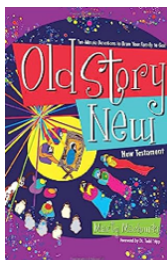
How and When to Tell Your Kids about Sex by Stan and Brenna Jones

Do you want to have healthy, honest, biblical conversations about sex with your kids? *How and When to Tell Your Kids about Sex* equips you with the strategies, tools, and insights for age-appropriate discussions at every stage of your child's life.



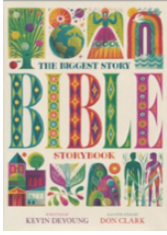
Long Story Short by Marty Machowski

Do you have ten minutes a day, five days a week? That's enough time to pass on to your kids the most valuable treasure the world has ever known. *Long Story Short* is a family devotional program designed to explain God's plan of salvation through the Old Testament and is suitable for children from preschool through high school.



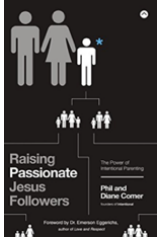
Old Story New by Marty Machowski

Old Story New makes it easy for parents to stay on the life-giving course of sharing the gospel story with their family. This second volume in Marty Machowski's family devotional series continues the gospel story begun in *Long Story Short*.



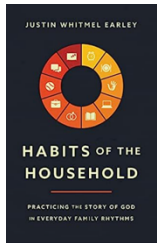
The Biggest Story Bible Storybook by Kevin DeYoung

A beautifully illustrated storybook that takes kids on a journey from Genesis to Revelation. Each section of the reading ends with a prayer children can pray out loud.



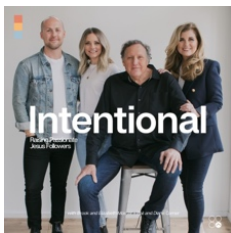
Raising Passionate Jesus Followers by Phil and Diane Comer

This book aims at helping parents through each stage of parenting. The Comers offer their personal experience raising their four kids who all love and serve Jesus today. More importantly, they anchor what they have to say in Scripture.



Habits of the Household by Justin Earley

This book equips parents with practical ways to build spiritual conversations and habits into the regular rhythm of their family. Earley, a busy attorney with four kids, offers helpful ways to prioritize family discipleship.



The Intentional Parents Podcast hosted by Phil and Diane Comer and Brook and Elizabeth Mosser

This podcast offers helpful interviews and conversations on all things parenting, including issues of discipline, schooling, behavior, Bible reading, sexuality, age dynamics, and so much more.



The Family Discipleship Podcast from The Village Church

Like the Intentional Parents podcast, The Family Discipleship Podcast offers another great series of interviews and conversations that can help encourage parents as they seek to raise their kids to believe the gospel of Jesus.



CORAM DEO
C H U R C H

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