

**CHM Leadership Certification
Level III, Course #2**

**RAISING SPIRITUAL GIANTS
Julie Weslake, SPD Children's Ministries
(Handouts)**

Raising Spiritual Giants. We all like to ensure children are healthy and strong. We also spend a lot of money on ensuring children are educated with well developed intellects. To raise children who are spiritual giants must also become our priority.

Who Are the Giants?

Goliath or David?

Children who are spiritual giants are children who:

- Accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord
- Accept the Bible as truth and as a guide
- Make their faith in God and their relationship with Him, their highest priority
- Live as intentional and growing servants of God.

Matthew 18: 2-6

Want to enter God's Kingdom? *Become like little children*

Want to be great in God's eyes? *Become like little children*

Want to welcome Jesus? *Then welcome little children*

Want to avoid God's anger? *Then don't let little children go astray*

Want to follow Jesus example? *Then love, pray for, accept, be with and bless little children*

Spiritual Growth a Priority

"If people do not embrace Jesus Christ as their Saviour before they reach their teenage years, the chance of their doing so at all is slim." -- George Barna

Ages at Which People Become Christians

George Barna:

“If children can be persuaded when they are young, then it is incredibly difficult to change their allegiance as they age.”.

Why must spirituality be a priority?

1. Because children matter to God.
2. Because most people decide their relationship to Jesus when young.
3. Because children are an investment in the future - theirs and ours.
4. Because of the power of child evangelism.
5. Because children are the battlefield of today’s world.

What do Kids Need?

1. God’s vision for their life
2. A biblical world view
3. Parents as primary spiritual disciplers
4. Supportive churches

1. God’s vision for their life.

- Help them understand why God put them on this earth.
- Help them be in tune with God.
- Help them burn with passion for something for God.

2. A Biblical Worldview

- Does God exist?
- What is the character and nature of God?
- How and why was the world created?
- What is the nature and purpose of humanity?
- What happens after we die on earth?
- What spiritual authorities exist?
- What is truth?

3. Parents as Primary Spiritual Disciplers

- Kids need parents who will help them be disciples and advance in their relationships with God.
- No one has more potential to influence a child’s relationship with God than parents.
- No one has more potential to monitor a child’s relationship with God than parents.

Dr Kenneth L Gladish

“Children are hardwired for close connections to others and for moral and spiritual meaning.”

Hardwired to Connect, The New scientific Case for Authoritative Communities.

“Primary nurturing relationships influence early spiritual development.”

Hardwired to Connect, The New scientific Case for Authoritative Communities.

- Parents must start the spiritual training of children when they are young.

D6 – Deuteronomy 6:4-6

“Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These . . . are to be on your hearts.”

Deut. 6: 4-6

Deut 6:7

“Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” Deut. 6: 7

- Parents must be strategic in how children are disciplined
- Plan discipleship around the natural rhythms of the day - morning time, meal time, drive time and bedtime.
- Include intentional, planned learning and incidental teachable moments.
- Model Christ for your children.
- Have intimate conversations
- Include rituals and traditions
- Provide encouragement and support.
- Parents must be strategic in how children are disciplined
- It is the Holy Spirit that brings about transformation.
- It is our responsibility to be available and diligent in our own spiritual growth and be willing to invest in the spiritual growth of our children.
- Parents may need to give up some of their own agendas so that they have the time and resources to disciple their children. They should see themselves as spiritual coaches.

Ellen G. White

"The last mediatorial work of Christ before laying off His priestly garments, is to present the prayers of parents for their children. I saw a mighty angel sent out and thousands

of children will remember their early training and be brought back just before probation closes." *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald, 1890*

4. Supportive Churches

Parents need churches that will help them know how to be spiritual leaders.

George Barna, p. 181

"When a church – intentionally or not – assumes a family's responsibilities . . . it fosters an unhealthy dependence upon the church to relieve the family of its Biblical responsibility."

- What happens at home is as important as what happens at church.
- How can we get parents to also teach what we are teaching their kids?
- How can we collaborate with and partner with them?
- How can we equip them and empower them?

Resources

- Gracelink is not just something that happens at Sabbath School. It is something that must happen at home, with daily Bible stories, prayer and experiences that help apply the message.
- Kids In Discipleship is another great ministry with resources to equip and support parents as disciplers of their children.

Daphne Kirk, *Heirs Together*, 2003

Children believe that Church is mostly for adults unless they are included in a meaningful way.

Children believe that they have no say in what happens in the church unless they are given some ownership.

Children believe that they have nothing significant to contribute unless their input is valued and respected.

Children believe that they are always the receivers in church unless adults are open to receiving ministry from them.

Children believe that they must wait until they are older to discover their gifts and callings unless their gifts and callings are recognised and encouraged."

Churches Can Help

1. Worship
2. Evangelism

3. Discipleship
4. Stewardship
5. Service
6. Community

Daphne Kirk, p. 60

“If children are nurtured, released, trained, empowered and given a vision for their lives, then when they reach adolescence, their roots will be deep.”

In Summary

1. Churches must invest in ministry to children. Not just go through the motions.
2. There must be a consistent, coordinated strategy with commitment to the “big picture plan.”
3. Measure success by the changes made in a child’s life and how well the parents are equipped and involved at home.
4. Teaching methods must be formational and transformational.
5. Children must be active participants in their learning.
6. Children need committed leaders and mentors.
7. Pastors must support and empower children and families.

(Need a picture of children or grandchildren)

If Peter and Oliver were a part of your church, can you assure me that they will be spiritual giants by the time they get to 13 years old?

If their parents were members of your church, what are you doing to equip and support them as spiritual leaders for their children?

To be in heaven is our dream and I know that Jesus wants children to be there.

2 Chronicles 20:13

“And all Judah stood before the Lord with their little ones, their wives and their children.”

In times of crises the children of Israel joined as a community to pray and work together. May your whole community collaborate to ensure that children are spiritual giants.