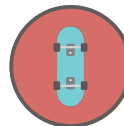


PARENTING PLAN

YEAR 5: PRAYER



HI FRIEND!



We've heard it through the grapevine that there's a birthday in your family this month! As your child enters into Year 5, we want to focus on **Prayer**.

At First Capital, we believe that a child's home is the number 1 faith-building, disciple-making environment that there is. We want to partner with you as you raise your fearfully and wonderfully made child. We've created a discipleship program that goes from year 1 all the way to year 18 when you're launching your child out into the world. We offer this plan that focuses on one thing every year when it comes to following Jesus.

This plan isn't supposed to be a course in everything you need to know when it comes to parenting and raising a child to love and follow Jesus. But we hope that every year, this plan will help you and your family take one step closer to Jesus.

This plan is just one part of many resources that we want to provide for you. Many of those resources can be found on our Parent Resources Wall in the lobby.

During this first phase of your child's life we label as the Engage Phase, we focus on

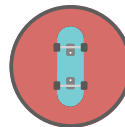
- I need to make the wise choice
- I should treat others the way I want to be treated
- I can trust God no matter what

If you have any questions or just need an adult to talk to anytime this year, we are available to you! You can reach out to anybody on the Family Ministry Team.

Evalina Pinnick - evalina@churchanywhere.us
Marianne Rader - marianne@firstcapitalchristian.org
Spencer Roberts - spencer@firstcapitalchristian.org
Patrick Crawford - patrick@churchanywhere.us

We are praying for you and your family,
The Family Ministry Team

WRITE A LETTER TO YOUR FUTURE 18-YEAR-OLD

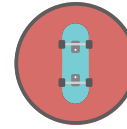


Each year throughout the parenting plan, take time to write your child a letter. Below are some ideas of things to include that will both speak life and love into your child as well as give them an invaluable collection of insights into their upbringing and a storyline of memories to be cherished for the rest of their lives. You could collect them in a journal or write each letter as a separate paper.

- things I've loved about you this year**
- fun stories from the last year**
- favorite toy**
- my prayer for you in the next year**
- things that made you laugh the most**
- what I want for your life**
- a scripture verse that I picked out for you this year**

Include a photo of your family with the letter to give a year-by-year collection of memories all in one place. Each year after giving your child the letter, get it back and keep them all somewhere safe. You will give them all to your child in the 18th year for LAUNCH.

PRAYER



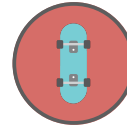
TEACH YOUR CHILDREN TO PRAY

One of the greatest things you can do as a parent is to help your child develop a relationship with God through prayer. You will nurture your child's faith by praying together as a family and by guiding them in the practice of praying individually. This year, we want to challenge you to focus on prayer as a family. In his book, *Prayer – What Difference Does It Make?* (Zondervan, 2006), Philip Yancey encourages us to build an authentic and uncomplicated life of prayer by summarizing Jesus' teaching on prayer with these simple principles:

KEEP IT HONEST • KEEP IT SIMPLE • KEEP IT UP

MODEL PRAYER: As you spend this year teaching your child about prayer, make a commitment to teach and model a natural, authentic and intimate prayer life that is about spending meaningful time with God. We are working more on fostering a relationship this year, than learning religious behavior.

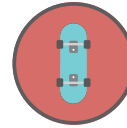
PRAYER



FAMILY ROUTINE: Making prayer a regular part of your family culture will help make it a normal part of your child's life. Consider how you can have a set family time during the normal rhythms of your day. Here are a few suggestions:

- **Mealtime:** Briefly give thanks before you eat, and then wait until everyone has finished to have a longer time of prayer.
- **Bedtime:** When the first person in the family goes to bed (usually the youngest), have everyone gather on mom and dad's bed, in the family room or in the youngest one's room.
- **Drive time:** As you start the engine, take time to pray together, maybe even inviting everyone to pray a sentence prayer of gratitude or for any concern about the upcoming activities of the day. This is a great routine to begin as you drive to school in the morning, or a way to kick off a road trip.
- **Walks:** Taking a walk together is another good time to pray. Teach them how they don't always pray with their head bowed and eyes closed. You can talk about how God used to come and walk with Adam and Eve in the garden during the "cool of the day." Maybe your child opens up on walks and you can finish up each walk praying about what they brought up as you talked together on your walk.

JUMP START PRAYERS: IDEAS TO HELP START



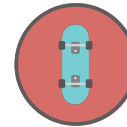
Sentence Prayers: Take turns allowing each person who is comfortable doing so to pray a very short, one sentence prayer. It can be as simple as “Please heal Uncle Paul.” “Thank you for giving Ethan a new friend.” or “I’m sorry for losing my temper with everyone earlier today.”

Fill-in-the-Blank Prayers: Guide prayer times by using the following starter lines: • God, I love you because... • Thank you God for... • God, please help... • God, I’m sorry for...

PRAYER TOOLS AND IDEAS: **Prayer Board:** Use a dry erase board to keep a list of requests the family is praying for together. Put it somewhere you will see it each day to help you remember to pray for certain things. **Prayer Journal:** Consider purchasing a journal for your child to start recording prayers and how God answers them. **Fishbowl Prayers:** Keep a fishbowl in the kitchen and fill it with slips of paper that have people or ministries written on them that you would like to pray for. Have someone draw one each night, and pray for that person together. This is a great way to teach your child the many things they could pray about, including missionaries, the sick, the lost, their relatives, our country’s leaders, etc.

STOP, DROP & PRAY: Teach your family to stop and pray for things in the moment. For example, if your child is talking to you about a problem, stop and pray about it right then. If your family just received bad news, stop and pray about it together. If your child is struggling with their behavior, stop and ask God to help him. Sometimes when we don’t stop right in the moment, we forget to pray about it later. If you hear the sound of an ambulance or fire truck, stop and pray about that situation together. This can also teach your child that he can pray throughout the entire day with small simple prayers.

SHOW GOD AS LOVING PARENT BY CONTINUING A HEALTHY MARRIAGE



- Each year we want to encourage you to make a plan to keep your marriage healthy. One of the most important gifts you'll give to your child is the love you give to your spouse. When mom and dad love each other and demonstrate the traits of a healthy (NOT PERFECT!) marriage, it not only sets a good example of a godly marriage but gives them a greater sense of security and well-being.
- Good marriages require intentionality. Use the plan below to make an intentional effort in your marriage this year. Read *The Best Us* by Ted Lowe (@MarriedPeople 2016) for a full explanation of Have Serious Fun! Love God First; Respect and Love; Practice Your Promise.

Have Serious Fun! Date Night Scheduling:

- Grab your calendars and mark at least TWO date nights for each month and PROTECT those dates. Remember that you were boyfriend and girlfriend before you were dad and mom, and have fun together! No family administration discussions!

Love God First - Faith Practices 101:

- Research finds that couples who pray together at least twice a week have a divorce rate of less than 1% (HomePointe). Commit to praying as a couple at least twice a week. Plan which worship service the two of you will attend together each week – don't "divide and conquer" in order to volunteer.

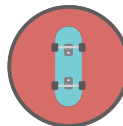
Love and Respect - Write an Annual Letter:

- Write a letter to your spouse for your anniversary this year, much like the one in this packet that you will write to your child. Write a letter of memories from this past year, affirmations, prayers and promises to each other.

Practice Your Promise - Personal Growth:

- Set a "secret goal" to grow as a spouse, such as "listening better," "praising her in public," or "initiating romance." Write it down and seal it in an envelope. When you receive next year's packet, open the envelope and assess your progress.

DOWNLOAD THE PARENT CUE APP



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**Parent Cue
creates the plan,
so you can make
the memories.**

