



REDEEMING
GRACE

A PARENT'S COMPANION TO THE CHILDREN'S DISCIPLESHIP GUIDE

**"TRAIN UP A CHILD IN THE WAY HE
SHOULD GO, EVEN WHEN HE IS OLD HE
WILL NOT DEPART FROM IT."**

- PROVERBS 22:6

PREFACE TO THE PARENT'S EDITION

The Purpose of a Parent's companion:

The purpose of this parent's companion is simply to help parent's communicate these important truths of God's Word. The hope is that some of this material will serve as a help to the parent in teaching these truths to their children. Most of the children's questions and answers are quite basic and hardly controversial for any conservative believer. There may be, however, a few items that YOU—the parent—might have slightly differing views on. That is perfectly fine and it is YOUR responsibility to teach your child God's truth. Certainly you will notice some questions can be expanded on at the parent's discretion. The parent should best know the maturity level of their child.

The Importance of each parent taking the leadership in training their children:

Jesus makes a stunning statement that many parents do not give much thought about. This stunning statement can be found in Luke 6:40, "*A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher*" (NASB). The immediate context of this verse is not speaking of a parent training their child, but we certainly get an important principle taught here. In general, the person who is trained often ends up mirroring the person who trained them.

We see this principle play itself out in the secular world. Many of our schools and colleges are quite liberal. Their philosophy or "worldview" is quite contrary to the Scriptures. Many students end up graduating from these secular institutions with the same or very similar views as that of their instructors. With this in mind, all parents should see the importance of actively training their children in the ways of the Lord. This is too important to be left to someone else.

The leadership of RGBC is committed to the biblical philosophy that it is the parents who are to be the primary instructors for their children. The parents should be actively asking their children what they are learning in their children's classes. This obligation to train our children in the ways of the Lord is simply too important to ignore.

May this parent's companion be of use for training your children in the ways of the Lord today, so that they can better serve Him for His glory tomorrow!

Teachings about the Bible

1. According to the Bible, what is our source of ultimate truth?

The Bible says that it is our source of ultimate truth. (Jn. 17:17) We live in an a post-modern world that says there is no certain truth. Our children will be confronting with this philosophy in schools, on TV, on the internet, on billboards and any number of other places. Thus, it is incumbent upon the parents to make sure that their children are constantly taught that the bible contains absolute truth, and that when they want true life answers they should seek those answers from the bible. In this world, our children are like Salmon swimming up- stream against the tide of our culture.

2. According to the Bible, is there such a thing as absolute truth?

The Bible says that it contains absolute truth; and it is God's word and God cannot lie. (Num. 23:19) Again it is important to build a trust in God's word with our children. Some of you are aware of what are called *textual variants* and such, I am not addressing those here, our children do not need to be aware of them at a young age. We want to set the foundation of trust in them concerning God's word.

Allow me to say a word of caution here to the parents. (I fully realize that every reader will not agree with me on this matter, but I thank you for taking the time to consider what I am saying. While I lack much knowledge, I do know that God has had me in a place to closely interact with college students for almost a decade now. I can tell you from those interactions that issues such as this go a long way in constructing their world view.) We must be very careful of unintended consequences. I am particularly thinking of the area of science. I am convinced that the bible is perfectly accurate in every area, including the area of science. We must remember that the bible is written to communicate with man. This is why we read such things as Joshua saying that the sun stood still. He was not trying to make a scientific declaration. He was simply doing what modern day meteorologist do today when they speak of the sunrise and sunset. Joshua was speaking from man's perspective. They are not trying to be technically accurate they are simply trying to communicate in plain human language.

We must remember that God created all things, so obviously he knows how all things work. We would not even understand how all of God's creation works, if He did try to communicate it to us. So, again I warn all of us to be careful what we teach our children. If we teach them that the bible has errors in the area of science, then we should not be surprised when our children buy into such foolishness as *people being born homosexual, or life not beginning until birth*. These are but two examples of what we might call unintended consequences if we do not teach our children that God's word is our only source of absolute truth and that it does not contain any errors. It is the mind of man that contains the errors, but never God's word.

3. According to the Bible, why can we trust the Bible?

The Bible says it is God's word. God breathed it out. We call this the inspiration of the Bible. (2 Tim. 3:16) This truth will help support the first two questions. You can also use 2 Peter 1:19-21. The word translated "moved or carried along," in v. 21 is particularly instructive. This word was used of a strong wind that would move ships. We can think of a sailboat—this would be a good illustration for our children. The idea is that as the original authors of Scripture wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they were controlled, that is,

moved along by the Holy Spirit. The point is that just as a sailboat can only go in the direction the wind is blowing—since the wind controls it—these men only wrote what God wanted them to write, because the Holy Spirit was controlling them. You can also have your children talk and put their hand in front of their mouths at the same time. As they feel the air from their words, you can tell them that in the same way God’s word is “*God-breathed*,” in that it comes directly from His mouth. Instilling a trust in God’s word is paramount. I have begun with questions regarding God’s word, because every answer to every one of our questions will come from God’s word. Most modern theology books also start with *bibliology*, the study of the bible. They do this because, everything that will be taught throughout the rest of the theology book, hinges on the trustworthiness of the bible.

4. According to the Bible, does the Bible have any mistakes in it?

The Bible says that it is from God so it has no mistakes. We call this inerrancy, because there are no errors in the Bible. (Jn. 17:17) See comments under question number two. Remember this is very important to stress. We can also use a number of other verses. The fact that the bible has no errors is also called *inerrancy*. Inerrancy means “being without error.” Logically, it stands to reason that if the bible is God’s word and God is perfect, then the bible has no errors. If the bible has errors (remember we are talking about the original autographs of Scripture) then God must be able to make mistakes. Obviously, that is not true. It may also be helpful to show your children how Jesus relied upon God’s word when tempted by Satan in Matthew 4:1-11. If Jesus trusted and relied upon God’s word then we should also.

Teachings about the God-Head

5. According to the Bible, who made God?

The Bible says that God is self-existent and that He made everything in the universe. (Psalm 90:2) It is interesting to note that God does not begin His word with an argument about His existence. We just read “*In the beginning God . . .*” God’s existence is so self-evident in creation that no argument needs to be made for His existence in the bible. What we are teaching are children here about the self-existence of God is that He has always existed. God is the Creator, He has no beginning and no end. Our minds are used to beginnings and endings. God is the first cause from which all other effects flow.

6. According to the Bible, how many God’s are there?

The Bible says there is but one God who exists in three persons. We call this the Trinity. (Deut. 6:4) We see the God-head interacting as early as Genesis 1:26 in the act of creating man. Obviously trying to teach the concept of the Trinity to our children is quite difficult. There are no perfect illustrations. You could, however, use a banana. You can split the meat of a banana into three equal parts. You could demonstrate this for your children. Each of the three parts of the banana consists of the same material. So it is with the God-head. God the Father, God the son, and God the Holy Spirit are all co-eternal (meaning they have no beginning and no end), co-equal (meaning they consist of the exact same substance.)

We know that God the Father is God. We know that Jesus is God because He forgives sins (Mark 2:1-12), He has always existed (Jn. 17:5), He knows all things (Jn. 4:29), and the Jews constantly sought to kill Him because He claimed to be God. That the Holy Spirit is God, is made clear in Acts 5:3, where Ananias is said to

have lied to the Holy Spirit, then in 5:5, Ananias is said to have lied to God. The point being that the Holy Spirit is God.

7. According to the Bible, Who are the persons in the Trinity?

The Bible says that there is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 28:19) We see the God-head interacting as early as Genesis 1:26 in the act of creating man. Obviously trying to teach the concept of the Trinity to our children is quite difficult. There are no perfect illustrations. You could, however, use a banana. You can split the meat of a banana into three equal parts. You could demonstrate this for your children. Each of the three parts of the banana consists of the same material. So it is with the God-head. God the Father, God the son, and God the Holy Spirit are all co-eternal (meaning they have no beginning and no end), co-equal (meaning they consist of the exact same substance.)

We know that God the Father is God. We know that Jesus is God because He forgives sins (Mark 2:1-12), He has always existed (Jn. 17:5), He knows all things (Jn. 4:29), and the Jews constantly sought to kill Him because He claimed to be God. That the Holy Spirit is God is made clear in Acts 5:3, where Ananias is said to have lied to the Holy Spirit, then in 5:5, Ananias is said to have lied to God. The point being that the Holy Spirit is God.

Teachings about man

8. According to the Bible, who made you and everything in the Universe?

The Bible says that God made me and everything in the universe. (Gen. 1; Prov. 16:4; Col. 1:16) We can also stress to our children that not only did God create everything, He sustains everything (Col. 1:16).

9. According to the Bible, how did God make man?

The Bible says God made Adam by taking dust from the ground and breathing life into it. (Gen. 1:26; 2:7) It is very important that we stress how God made man. It is clear from the text, that God did not use evolution. Man has two principle parts: 1) immaterial—our bodies which were made from the dust; 2) material—which is our Spirit or souls which come from His breath. The fact that man was made from the dust of the ground has confused many a scientist. This is why man has minerals found in the ground. These types of similarities point to the same Creator of all things, not evolution. It is very important to stress these facts to our children.

We can also stress the fact that we are made in God's image. While we may not fully understand what that entails, we can point out that God made us above the animals in that we can commune with Him. God made us with emotions, intellect, and a will to make decisions. It is important to stress to our children that God made man to be above and distinct from animals. We are not merely one of the animals, we are made above the animals and to have dominion over the animals.

10. According to the Bible, did God make man by using evolution?

The Bible says that God did not use evolution to create man. (Heb. 11:3) This goes with question number nine. We are not trying to be technical here and get into *micro* and *macroevolution*. It is important, however, to get our children to think logically through what the bible teaches. It is plain how God made man. Genesis 2:7 is quite clear. It leaves absolutely no room for evolution. Remember that the bible pictures God as creating all

things *ex-nihilo*, this means that God created everything from nothing. God did not use already existing material to create the world. How detailed each parent gets in describing creation is up to their own discretion. It should, however, be noted that while much disagreement exists about the nature of the six days of creation, the fact that God created instantaneously on each day should be stressed.

Issues such as the exact nature of the days of creation should be kept in perspective. It is important to remember that whether or not one believes the days of creation to be literal twenty-four hour days or longer periods of time, it is not an issue of salvation. The exact nature of the days is not a cardinal doctrine like the deity of Christ, salvation by grace alone, or the second coming of Christ, just to name a few. It is, however, of the utmost importance that one believes that God Himself directly created the universe without using preexisting material.

It should also be pointed out that the exact nature of the days of creation is not as important as God's act of creation itself. In other words, how long the days actually were are not as important as God's act of creation. We must be careful not to rob God of His glory by trying to go beyond what He has declared in His word. Also, we must think biblically. When God created man He very clearly tells us that he took dust from the ground and breathed life into it. Did that take a million years? Did that take twenty-four hours? Of course not! It took a second! This is how God created on each of the six days. He created instantaneously on each of the six days. Without question this is how God made man, so why would we expect Him to have done anything differently on the other five days of creation?

We must also remember that God is communicating with man. When God tells us what He made on each of the six days of creation, He is simply communicating much like we do. For example, let's suppose that someone has a workout routine written out that is six days a week. They may say that on day one they run a mile, on day two they do fifty sit-ups, on day three they run two miles . . . etc. In saying this, the person hardly means that it takes twenty-four hours, much less a million years, to do each of these workouts. The person is simply communicating a sequence of action. There is no reason to believe that God is doing anything other than that.

Now let's finish where we started—with God's creation. When God wrote the creation account, it is hard to imagine that His intent was for us to argue about the exact nature of the days of creation. I rather think that God's purpose in recording His act of creation was so that we might glorify and honor Him!

11. According to the Bible, why did God make man?

The Bible says that God made man to live for Him and to bring Him glory. (Ps. 86:9; Isa. 60:21; Rom. 11:36) The main point here is that we are not made for our own pleasures. We are not to be hedonistic as the world is. We were made for God's glory. A hedonist lives for his own pleasure. We are to live for God's pleasure, because that glorifies Him. When we are living a life that glorifies God, we will be filled with joy.

Teachings about the Family

12. According to the Bible, why did God design marriage?

The Bible says that God did not want man to be alone. (Gen. 2:18) You can explain how God made Eve from Adam's rib. For older children you could talk about God's purpose including procreation. Each parent, of course, must use their own discretion at this point.

13. According to the Bible, what is God's design for marriage?

The Bible says that God has commanded that marriage be between one man and one woman for a lifetime. (Gen. 2:24) This is a question that older catechisms would have never dreamed of having to specify! For obvious reasons in our culture, we need to stress this truth. How much we stress this truth will depend, of course, on the age of the child. As parents, we need to be sure that we are not so naïve as to think that our children will not be impacted by our culture's promotion of homosexuality and same sex marriage. For this reason, we must be very proactive in teaching our children God's design for marriage. It is important to set the foundation in our children before the world does.

14. According to the Bible, why does God give children to parents?

The Bible says that God gives children to parents as a blessing. (Ps. 127:3-5) Children are a blessing to parents. One of the greatest ways to glorify God is to raise children according to God's word. This is a good opportunity to reinforce to our children that we love them and that they are important to God. (Ps. 139)

[I desired to put a question in that relates to abortion. I did not do that because with the children being at such a diverse age, it is hard to draw the line between giving too much information and not enough. I would encourage each parent to discern what their child is ready for, and talk to them about abortion. Our children will hear about abortion at a young age whether at school or on the news. You can use Psalm 139. You could also point out that life absolutely starts at conception. Psalm 51:5 is a wonderful verse to use to show both that life begins at conception and that we have a sin nature from conception, hence the need for Christ's righteousness. Jeremiah 1:5, also shows that God knows us before we are even born. This is further proof that life begins at conception. Psalm 139:13, 16 are also very instructive regarding this issue.]

15. According to the Bible, how are you to act toward your parents?

The Bible says that I am to honor and obey my parents. (Eph. 6:1-3; Col. 3:20) We can explain to our children that they are honoring and obeying God as they honor and obey their parents.

Teachings about Jesus

16. According to the Bible, who is Jesus?

The Bible says that Jesus is God. (Jn. 10:30) We know that Jesus is God because: 1) He existed from eternity past, that is before the world was created (John 8:58, 17:5; 2); 2) He claimed be present everywhere, which we call omnipresent (Matt. 18:20; 28:20); 3) He knows all things, which we call omniscience (Matt. 16:21; Lk. 6:8, 11:17; John 4:29); 4) He was all powerful, which we call omnipotence—(Matt. 28:28; Mark 5:11-15; John 11:38-44); 5) He forgives sins which only God can do—(Mark 2:1-12); 6) He grants spiritual life to people, which only God can do—(John 5:21); 7) He will raise the dead—(John 11:43); 8) He will judge all people—(John 5:22, 27); 9) He was given names and titles that are only fitting for God—("Son of God" Jn. 10:36; "Lord" Luke 1:76; Rom. 10:13; "God" Jn. 1:1, Heb. 1:8; "King of Kings and Lord of Lords" Rev. 19:16); 10) Jesus Himself claimed to be God—(Jn. 10:30). This is very important to stress to our children, given the fact that so many cults exist who say Jesus was a good man or even a prophet, but not actually God.

17. According to the Bible, did Jesus ever sin in His life?

The Bible says that Jesus never sinned. (Heb. 4:14-16) Obviously this is essential since Jesus could not be our Savior if He ever committed a sin. From His birth, Jesus was called a “holy child” (Lk. 1:35) Even during His trials Jesus was acknowledged as innocent (by Judas Matt. 27:4; by Pilate six times 23:15; by Herod Antipas Lk. 23:15; by Pilate’s wife Matt. 27:19; by the repentant thief Lk. 23:41; and by the Roman Centurion Matt. 27:54). The apostle Paul said that Jesus “knew no sin” (2 Cor. 5:21). Peter said the same thing (1 Pet. 2:22).

18. According to the Bible, what did Jesus do for sinners?

The Bible says that Jesus died for sinners. Jesus was crucified on the cross in the place of sinners. We call this the Substitutionary Atonement. (Matt. 20:28; Jn. 1:29) This means that Jesus actually took the sinners place on the cross. Each person should have to pay for their own sin, but Jesus died so that those who believe in Him as Lord and Savior do not have to suffer for their sins. Those who do not believe in Jesus will pay for their own sins by spending an eternity apart from Christ (Rev. 20:12). It is important to stress that Jesus’ death was not just a mere example or a just merely a display of God’s love, but He actually paid for the sins of believers. Those who do not believe in Jesus will pay for their own sins in the Lake for Fire for eternity.

19. According to the Bible, how is Jesus our propitiation?

The Bible says that Jesus satisfied God’s demands for holiness and justice. Thus, Jesus was our propitiation and he endured the wrath of God, which we deserved, on the cross. (Rom. 3:25; 1 Jn. 2:2; 4:10) Because God is completely holy and righteous, He cannot be in the presence of sin. For this reason it was necessary for Jesus to satisfy God’s demand for holiness and justice. Jesus did this by dying on the cross in the place of the sinner.

20. According to the Bible, how do we get Jesus’ righteousness imputed to us?

The Bible says that we can only get Jesus’ righteousness imputed to us by believing in Him. (Rom. 5:18) We might explain this idea of imputation as the opposite of amputation. While amputation is the removal of something, imputation is the addition of something. The Bible says that there are three great imputations: 1) Adam’s imputed sin to all mankind (Rom. 5:12); 2) Our sin imputed to Christ on the cross (2 Cor. 5:19; 1 Pet. 2:24); 3) Christ’s righteousness imputed to believers (Rom.5; 2 Cor. 5:21).

21. According to the Bible, what happened to Jesus’ body after He died on the cross?

The Bible says His body was put into a “tomb,” which was like a cave. (Jn. 20:1-2)

22. According to the Bible, how long did Jesus’ body stay in the tomb?

The Bible says that Jesus’ body stayed in the tomb for three days and three nights. (Matt. 12:38-40)

23. According to the Bible, what happened to Jesus’ body after three days and three nights?

The Bible says His body was raised from the dead, and He is now at the right hand of the Father. (Matt. 28:6; 1 Cor. 15:4; Ps. 110:1) Because Jesus was raised from the dead all believers will be raised to life. 1 Corinthians 15 is a key chapter regarding the resurrection. It makes it clear that the bible is the authority and it also gives proofs of the resurrection in the form of people seeing Jesus after His resurrection. He was on earth for forty days after His resurrection then He ascended into Heaven. The bible says that the ascension took place toward “Bethany” (Lk. 24:50; Acts 1:9).

Teachings about sin

24. According to the Bible, who is guilty of sin?

The Bible says that all have sinned. (Rom. 3:23) All people were conceived as sinners (Ps. 51:5), and Adam's sin was imputed to all mankind (Rom. 5:12). Each person is completely responsible for their own sin.

25. According to the Bible, what is sin?

The Bible says sin is "missing God's mark." All disobedience to God's commands is sin. (Rom. 3:23) Perhaps a visual of a dart board would be good to use as an illustration for the children. I would suggest a magnetic dart board! The important thing is that we teach our children that sin is a crime against a holy God and not merely a mistake or error.

26. According to the Bible, into what state are all people born?

The Bible says that all people are born sinners. We call this "Inherited sin." (Ps. 51:5; Eph. 2:3) We are stressing the aspects of sin because of their importance. The world around us hardly recognizes the word sin, so we must be diligent when it comes to this biblical truth.

27. According to the Bible, why are all people born sinners?

The Bible says that Adam and Eve's original sin has been imputed to each human being. (Rom. 5:12-18) It is here that we can remind our children about the imputed righteousness of Christ, as these two go together. While this may be too sophisticated for our children, there is a difference between inherited sin and imputed sin. Inherited sin comes to each individual through the seed of the father; whereas imputed sin speaks of the sin which comes from Adam to each individual. It is also interesting to note that Jesus had neither of these since His conception was a miraculous act of the Holy Spirit. There was no human man involved in Jesus' conception.

28. According to the Bible, what is the penalty of sin?

The Bible says the penalty for sin is an eternity separated from Him in the Lake of Fire. (Rom. 6:26) We want to stress to our children that people do not simply cease to exist, but rather they go to one of two places. We could also speak of the fact that it is appointed unto man once to die then the judgment (Heb. 9:27).

Teachings about Salvation

29. According to the Bible, what works can we do to be saved?

The Bible says we cannot do any works to save us. We can only be saved by God's grace through faith. (Eph. 2:8) In a world where most believe that one is saved based on works, this is one biblical truth that cannot be over stressed. We will want to explain that grace means "undeserved favor." This means that God does not give us His saving grace because of any works that we do. We can do nothing to deserve God's saving grace. We could use a report card as an example. We can explain to our children that the report card gives them a grade based on the work that they do in class. That is not grace, but rather something that they have earned. Salvation, on the other hand, is not based on anything we have done. This is why the bible says that we "are saved by grace." God's grace is given to us based on Christ's work on the cross.

30. According to the Bible, whom must we believe in, to be saved?

The Bible says we can only be saved by believing in Jesus. (Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12; Rom. 10:9) While this question may seem quite basic, we must remember that our children are growing up in a society that says either we cannot know for sure how to go to heaven or that there are many ways to heaven.

31. According to the Bible, what does it mean to truly believe in Jesus?

The Bible says we must completely trust in Jesus and repent from our sins. (Luke 13:3) The key point here is that we do not want our children to think that mere intellectual knowledge or ascent regarding Jesus is the same as believing unto salvation. We must be very careful here, because most of our children will answer “yes” if we ask them if they believe in Jesus. We do not want them to think that believing that Jesus exists or even that He is God, is the same thing as trusting Him for salvation.

32. According to the Bible, what is justification?

The Bible says that justification is when God declares a sinner righteous based on Jesus’ death on the cross. (Rom. 3:24; 4:6-8; 5:1) To say that one is justified is essentially synonymous with saying that one is saved. Justification speaks to how God saves us. Justification is tied very closely to righteousness. Justification is a judicial act of God whereby on the basis of Christ’s meritorious work righteousness is imputed to the sinner and the sinner is absolved from sin and its penalty. What we want to stress is that you can only be justified by faith in Christ. There are no works which can justify you.

33. According to the Bible, what is redemption?

The Bible says that redemption is when God bought us out of our slavery to sin by Jesus’ death. (Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7). Redemption in the bible is used in both the Old Testament and the New Testament to describe the release or freedom of a slave for a costly price. When applied to God’s redemption of man, however, it does not imply that He paid a price to anyone; but rather that through Christ’s death on the cross He purchased the believer back from the market place of sin (Rom. 6).

Perhaps a good way to explain this to our children would be to draw an illustration with a store. Take Walmart for example. We could change Walmart to “Sinmart.” We can explain that when we make a purchase at the store we go up to the register and pay money for the items we purchase. Only after the payment is made are the items able to be released from the store, then we can take them out of the store. In the same way all people are by nature in “Sinmart” and deserving of God’s wrath. (Eph. 2:3) But Jesus comes into Sinmart and purchases the believer out of Sinmart with His blood! (1 Pet. 1:18-19) The sinner is now redeemed and is no longer a slave to sin, but is to be Jesus’ slave.

34. According to the Bible, what is regeneration?

The Bible says that regeneration is when God saves a person by changing their hearts through the Holy Spirit. (Tit. 3:5) Regeneration can also be defined as “to be born again, or to be restored.” Sometimes the bible uses words like “made alive,” “quicken,” “born of God,” or “renewed” to describe regeneration. (Col. 2:13; Tit. 3:5; Jn. 3:3; Eph. 2:1) The key verse to describe regeneration is Titus 3:5: “*He saved us, not on the basis of*

deeds which we have done in righteousness (This stresses the fact that salvation is not based on our works.), *but according to His mercy* (Mercy is when we do not get what we deserve, whereas grace is when we get what we do not deserve.), *by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.*” Here we clearly see that the Holy Spirit is the agent that regenerates us.

We could explain this concept to our children by using the illustration of taking a bath. When children play outside and get muddy they take a bath and use soap to get physically clean. Our souls are muddy because of sin. We cannot wash our souls in the bathtub, so we must rely on God to clean our souls. God, the Holy Spirit does to our souls what soap does to our physical bodies, He washed our souls clean.

For older children you may want to also describe this idea of “renewing.” We see this word used in Romans 12:2 to speak of the “renewing of our mind.” We are told there by Paul that we can only be transformed by the renewing of our mind. If we trace this idea of “transformation” in the New Testament we find that we are transformed by beholding the glory of Christ. (2 Cor. 3:18) So then, how do we “behold” the glory of Christ? This happens through the gospel message (2 Cor. 4:6). In contrast the unbeliever’s mind is currently “blinded” by Satan so they cannot see the glory of Christ in the gospel. All of this ties into regeneration in this way: We are by nature blinded to the gospel, so God, the Holy Spirit, regenerates the sinner and renews the sinner by transforming the sinner. This transformation is accomplished by seeing the glory of Christ, which can be seen by seeing and understanding the gospel.

35. According to the Bible, what is sanctification?

The Bible says that sanctification means “to be made holy,” so it is to become more like Jesus. (1 Thess. 4:3) The basic definition of sanctification is “to be set apart.” We call this “initial sanctification.” It is when God sets us apart from the world to Himself, thus we are saved (1 Thess. 1:9). After one is saved there is also what is called “progressive sanctification.” This is the daily process of becoming more like Christ. Then there is what is called “final sanctification.” This is the same as “glorification,” in that it happens when we die and are separated from our sin nature. Whenever sanctification is used in the bible only the context tells us which of these three nuances is being stressed. Jesus said that we will be sanctified by “God’s word” (Jn. 17:17). This means that groups and programs will not do what only the word of God can do!

36. According to the Bible, when someone is saved, can they lose their salvation? (changed with 40)

The Bible says that the Holy Spirit seals us and keeps us saved, so we cannot lose our salvation. (Eph. 1:13; 4:30) The bible teaches that when someone becomes saved they can never lose their salvation. The bible is quite clear on this (John 10:27-30; Phil. 1:6; 1 Peter 1:3-5). We want to stress that we are saved by God’s power and kept by His power. Those who teach that we can lose our salvation are ultimately guilty of teaching a work-based salvation. They may say that you are initially saved by grace, but then you must maintain your salvation by doing certain works and not doing others. So ultimately this is a work-based salvation. The bible says that we are saved by grace and kept by grace!

The bible teaches that the Holy Spirit secures the believer’s salvation. The Holy Spirit is said to “seal” the believer (Eph. 1:13, 14; 4:30). The point is that the Holy Spirit is the believer’s guarantee that they are absolutely sure to go to heaven. In Ephesians 1:14 we see a very important word—“earnest or pledge.” This word has the idea of a down payment. The point is that the believer is given the Holy Spirit as a “down payment,” assuring that one day they will be in heaven. (The good news is that God never forecloses!)

37. According to the Bible, can we know for sure that we are saved?

The Bible says that God wants us to know that we are saved. (1 John 5:13) This is important because we live in a post modern world where the idea that someone would say that they know for sure that they are saved is considered to be ridiculous. But God wants us to know that we are saved. Why? Because we will produce more fruit and thus bring God more glory if we are secure in our salvation.

An illustration of why God wants us to be secure in our salvation can be drawn from the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge. After almost twenty people fell to their death while working on the bridge, the contractor decided to spend almost one million dollars on a safety net under the bridge. It ended up being an investment as production went up by almost thirty percent! The workers were now secure knowing that they were safe so they could be more productive. It is the same way in the Christian life. Christians should be more fruitful for God's glory when they know they are secure.

Teachings about the Holy Spirit

38. According to the Bible, who comes to live inside of believers?

The Bible says that the Holy Spirit lives inside of believers. We call this the Indwelling of the Spirit. (Jn. 7:37; Rom. 5:5; 1 Cor. 2:12; 2 Cor. 5:5) All believers have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This indwelling of the Spirit is given to the believer the moment they become saved. The moment a person is saved they are baptized by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13). When a person becomes saved the Holy Spirit comes inside of them to identify them with Christ. This is called spiritual baptism and it happens the moment a person is saved. One of the great results of this spiritual baptism is that the Holy Spirit then indwells the believer for the remainder of their earthly lives. The bible teaches that if a person does not have the "Spirit of Christ," which is the Holy Spirit, then they are not saved (Rom. 8:9). The bible also teaches about what is called the "filling of the spirit." This might be suitable for older children. The filling of the Spirit is different than the indwelling of the Spirit. While the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a one time event taking place at the moment of salvation and is permanent, the filling of the Holy Spirit can happen multiple times after a person is saved and it is not permanent. The bible teaches that the purpose of the filling of the Holy Spirit is so that the believer can accomplish a particular God-given task. The filling of the Holy Spirit is mentioned some fifteen times in the New Testament. The result of the Spirit's filling is that the believer is able to accomplish a particular task that they could not otherwise accomplish. Ultimately it is God working in us. The filling of the Spirit results in believers being able to boldly proclaim the gospel even in the face of great persecution (Acts 4:31; 11:24). The filling of the Spirit is what enabled the apostle Paul to be used of God in amazing ways (Acts 9:17; 13:9). The point we want to stress to our children is that we must completely rely on God in our lives. We can only accomplish things which glorify God by His working through us. Ultimately it is God who is accomplishing these things. This is what Jesus had in mind when He said that "apart from me you can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5).

We might be able to illustrate the difference between the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the Filling of the Holy Spirit to our children like this: We can compare a garden hose at our house with a large hose on a fire truck. The garden hose represents the indwelling of the Spirit. Water comes out of the garden hose with a particular force and will continue to come out unless someone turns it off. A fire truck on the other hand only contains a particular amount of water for the purpose of putting out fires. So the fire truck is filled with water for a particular purpose of putting out fires, just as the Spirit may fill a believer for a specific purpose. The water comes out with much more force through the large hose on the fire truck than it does out of a garden hose.

There is more power in the fire truck hose. The difference, however, is that eventually the water will stop coming out of the fire truck hose because the fire truck is filled with water for the specific purpose of putting out a fire. (And yes, this assumes there are no fire hydrants around!)

39. According to the Bible, how do believers receive spiritual gifts?

The Bible says that the Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to each believer based on God's will. (1 Cor. 12:11; 1 Pet. 4:10; 1 Cor. 2:12; 2 Cor. 5:5) We want to stress that God decides which spiritual gifts each believer gets. We can also stress that no believer is better than another because of their gifting. God decides which spiritual gifts to give to each believer and each believer is special to God.

40. According to the Bible, why does the Holy Spirit give believers spiritual gifts?

The Bible says that the Holy Spirit gives believers spiritual gifts to encourage each other and glorify God. (1 Cor. 12:11-18) This question will help our children to see that it is God who gives them their spiritual giftedness. A spiritual gift is an ability that God gives to the believer. Every believer has at least one spiritual gift (1 Pet. 4:10). Spiritual gifts are different from natural talents, though both come from God. Natural talents are given to us by God genetically through our parents. Spiritual gifts are given to us by God Christologically, that is, based on our union with Christ. Natural talents are given at physical birth, spiritual gifts are given at spiritual birth (1 Cor. 12:11). Just as natural talents may not display themselves for some years in each individual, spiritual gifts are much the same way. Some spiritual gifts were temporary while others are permanent. The spiritual gifts could be summed up thusly: (The following list is adapted from Charles Ryrie's *Basic Theology*.)

1. Apostleship (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11) This is a gift that was given by God for the founding of the church (Eph. 2:20). This gift was temporary and there are no more apostles today.

2. Prophecy (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:10) This gift has a technical sense and a general sense. The word can be used generally to mean one who proclaims God's word. This can apply to today to a preacher. Technically, this word was used to describe someone who could predict the future. This technical aspect was temporary and particularly important before the New Testament was finished. Now that we have the completed New Testament, this aspect of prophecy is not needed.

3. Miracles (1 Cor. 12:28a) & Healings (1 Cor. 12:9, 28, 30) These gifts were temporary and were given for the main purpose of proving the validity of the gospel message (Heb. 2:3-4). God can certainly still perform miracles and heal people today, but He does so directly.

4. Tongues and the interpretation of tongues (1 Cor. 12:10) The word for "tongues" means a human language. This gift was given so that one could understand a human language which they had not learned. The bible teaches that this temporary gift was given by God for the purpose of authenticating the gospel message, especially to Jewish people (1 Cor. 14:5, 21-22). It is important to note that this gift was a "sign for unbelievers," not believers (1 Cor. 14:22).

5. Evangelism (Eph 4:11): While all believers are called to witness to unbelievers, some are given the gift to clearly and boldly proclaim the gospel. This gift often involved preaching at a church for a few years at a time, like Timothy.

6. Pastor (Eph. 4:11): This is the ability to shepherd, provide for, care for, and protect God's people.
7. Serving (Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:12): This is the ability to help or serve in the broadest sense of the word.
8. Teaching (Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28): This is the ability to clearly communicate God's truth to people. While all pastors should have this gift, many who are not pastors have the gift.
9. Faith (1 Cor. 12:9): This is the ability to believe God for the supply of specific needs. Every believer should walk by faith, but not all have this particular spiritual gift of faith. It should be noted that the spiritual gift of faith is not the same as the faith that brings salvation.
10. Exhortation (Rom. 12:8): This involves the ability to encourage, comfort, and admonish people.
11. Distinguishing Spirits (1 Cor. 12:10): This was the ability to distinguish between true and false sources of false supernatural revelation when it was being given in oral form before the completion of the canon of Scripture.
12. Showing Mercy (Rom. 12:8): Like the gift of serving, this involves helping those who are sick and afflicted.
13. Giving (12:8): While all believers are to give, this seems to be a gift that some have to give most generously. It is done without any thought of return or self-gain.
14. Administration (Rom. 12:8; 1 Cor. 12:28): This is the ability to rule the church in an administrative capacity.
15. Wisdom and Knowledge (1 Cor. 12:28): Like other early-church gifts, these involved the ability to understand and communicate God's truth to people.

Teachings about the Church

41. According to the Bible, what is the church?

The Bible says that believers are the church. The church is not a building, but God's people. (Heb. 12:23) The church is made up of believers. Each believer is said to be the temple of God (1 Cor. 6:19). In the Old Testament, the Temple was a place of God's presence. Now that believers are indwelt with the Holy Spirit they are called the temple of God because God, the Holy Spirit, lives within us. The main point to get across to our children is that "church" is not a building but rather a people of God.

42. According to the Bible, why is it important for believers to worship God together?

The Bible says that believers are to meet together to encourage each other. (Heb. 10:24-25) This is a very important question because more and more our society is down-playing the importance of church attendance. Some statistics are showing that over fifty percent of college students who grew up regularly attending church do not attend church when they reach their college years. It goes without saying that it is the parents who will have the biggest influence in their child's view of church attendance. Children will see how important church

attendance is by watching their parents. They will be watching to see what kind of excuses parents use to skip church. They will also notice how important church is by whether or not they are chronically late to church.

A wise suggestion for parents would be to speak to their children regularly on Saturday nights, for instance, about the importance of what they will be doing the next morning. This will aid in reinforcing to the children both the importance of attending church and the importance of having our hearts prepared for worshipping God with other believers. A good example is found in 2 Chronicles 19:3, where Jehosaphat is commended for preparing his heart to seek God.

It is also important to point out to our children that God wants us to go to church with the aim of glorifying God by encouraging others. We are to do this by “stimulating others to love and good works.” It is also important for parents to be sure to not let the little ears hear bits of gossip about people at church. Of course, the best way to do that is for the parents to be a good example gossip! Again with the recent data coming out (but most importantly God’s command not to forsake church) it is tremendously important to teach our children by example the importance of church attendance.

43. According to the Bible, why do believers meet on Sundays?

The Bible says that believers are to meet on Sunday because that is when Jesus rose from the dead. (Jn. 20:19-20) The point of this question is to show our children why we do not meet on Saturdays for instance, like the Seventh Day Adventists. The New Testament tells us that the early church met on the first day of the week. The reason for this is the fact that Jesus rose again on the first day of the week. A few proofs of this would be: 1) Jesus rose on the first day of the week not the Sabbath: Mk 16:9; 2) All 6 appearances of Jesus happen on two Sundays, none on Sabbath. Mk 16:9; Mt 28:5-9; Lk 24:34; Lk 24:13-15; Lk 24:33,36; Jn 20:19; Jn 20:26. 3) Christians are recorded assembling three times on Sunday after resurrection and before ascension, never on the Sabbath. Jn 20:19 Jn 20:26 Acts 2:1; 4) The only time Christians are recorded to have assembled together was on a Sunday in Acts 20:7, never does it say the disciples assembled on the Sabbath; 5) The only day ever mentioned when Christians broke bread was on Sunday: Acts 20:7.

44. According to the Bible, why should believers have water baptism?

The Bible says that water baptism publicly identifies the believer with Christ. Water baptism does not in any way save the person, but it identifies the person with Jesus. (Matt. 28:19) This is simply a question where we can explain this ordinance of the church. Some churches call water baptism and the Lord’s Supper a sacrament instead of an ordinance. Typically the difference is that those who use the term sacrament see some type of grace being imparted to the recipient. The bible, however, does not indicate that any grace is imparted through water baptism or the Lord’s Supper to the recipient. For this reason, we prefer the word ordinance.

Water baptism finds its importance in the fact that it publicly identifies the professing believer to Christ. The bible shows us that water baptism was done by immersion. The reason the bible teaches that the believer should be baptized by immersion is because this provides the best external picture of what has happened internally. When the believer goes under the water it pictures the “old man”—that is the unsaved man—and as the believer comes back up from under the water it pictures the “new man”—that is the saved man. Immersion provides a vivid picture of the believer dying with Christ (pictured by going under the water) and being raised again to newness of life like Christ (pictured by coming up from under the water).

[I want to take a moment and clear up some possible confusion about water baptism. We are talking about what is called believer's baptism. We have also stated that water baptism does not save anyone. If water baptism does not take away sins and save anyone then how do we interpret Acts 2:38? First of all, the bible is quite clear that we are saved by grace through faith and that no works are involved. Therefore, we know that whatever Acts 2:38 is saying it is not saying that you must have water baptism in order to be saved. There are several ways to explain Acts 2:38. The simplest way to explain it is this: The key is the word "for." The phrase "for the remission of your sins," certainly seems to be saying that one should be baptized so that their sins may be forgiven. However, the Greek word used here which is translated as "for" in most English bibles can also be translated "because." The idea then is that one should be baptized *because* their sins have been forgiven. Here is an example in English. As an example, when one says "Take two aspirin for your headache," it is obvious to everybody that it does not mean "take two aspirin in order to get your headache," but instead to "take two aspirin *because* you already have a headache." This is exactly what our text means. Peter is saying to be baptized *because* your sins have already been forgiven.

There is one more question we should answer here. Why do we not baptize infants? The easy answer is that there are absolutely no examples of infants ever being baptized in the bible. Baptism is for those who have already believed on Christ as their Savior. This is why it is called believer's baptism.]

45. According to the Bible, why should believers observe the Lord's Supper?

The Bible says that we should observe the Lord's Supper to remember and proclaim Christ's death and to remind us that He is coming again. (1 Cor. 11:24-26; Matt. 26:29) In addition to remembering Christ's death on the cross, proclaiming his death, and assurance of His second coming, the Lord's Supper is a time of fellowship with other believers (1 Cor. 10:21). As is the case with believer's baptism, the Lord's Supper is only for those who have become saved.

46. According to the Bible, what is prayer?

The Bible says that prayer is when we talk to God. We should pray in church and outside of church. (Matt. 6:9-13) It is vitally important that we instill into our children a total reliance upon God. Prayer is a major part of that reliance upon God. We want to teach our children that a believer can pray to God at any place and at any time. For older children we can explain to them that God already knows what we have need of, thus we are not informing Him of anything (Matt. 6:8), and that when we pray God answers prayers according to His will not our will (1 John 5:14-15).

47. According to the Bible, who are to lead the church?

The Bible says that pastors or elders are to lead the church. (1 Tim. 3:1; Titus 1:5) The bible uses the terms elder, overseer, bishop and pastor synonymously.

48. According to the Bible, who can be a pastor or elder of a church?

The Bible says that a pastor or elder must be a man who meets certain requirements. (1 Tim. 2:11-15, 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) The key here is for our children to understand that God has commanded that a pastor or elder must be a man. Of course, this does not mean that women are inferior in any way. God's role for men and women inside and outside of the church are based on His design in creation (1 Tim. 2:11-15). This is particularly important to teach our children since we live in a society where the biblical roles of men and women have all but disappeared.

49. According to the Bible, who are the deacons of a church?

The Bible says that deacons are men who serve the church in many different ways. (1 Tim. 3:8-13) The key here is that the word deacon means "servant." So a deacon is a servant. While the word deacon is not explicitly used, the first concept of deacons can be found in Acts 6:1-8. There we see that these chosen servants have important roles in serving the congregation. While a pastor or elder is more specifically given to the preaching of God's word, a deacon can serve in any number of ways in a congregation.

End Times

50. According to the Bible, what is the second coming?

The Bible says that Jesus will come to earth again to gather all believers, judge unbelievers, and rule on His throne. (Matt. 25:31-46) Here we want to stress that in Jesus' first coming He came to die for the sins of mankind. But at the second coming Jesus is going to judge all unbelievers for their sin.

51. According to the Bible, what is the Great White Throne Judgment?

The Bible says that it is the judgment where all unbelievers will be sent to the Lake of Fire forever. (Matt. 25:46a; Rev. 20:14-15) It is here that we can point out to our children that God knows everything, that is, He is omniscient. As such, He will administer perfect justice to every unbeliever. This is different from our world, where we cannot have perfect justice. Our world is not just, but God is perfectly just.

52. According to the Bible, what happens to believers when Jesus returns to earth?

The Bible says that all believers will be with Jesus and will never be apart from Him again. (1 Thess. 4:17) Here you can teach about the Rapture and other end time events if you wish. The main point here is to contrast the end for unbelievers (cf. question # 51) with that of believers. We want to stress to our children that there are only two endings to our lives. One results in eternal separation from God, while the other results in eternal communion with God.

