

JOINING YOUR CHILD



On Their **SPIRITUAL**
JOURNEY

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**Joining Your Child on Their Spiritual Journey
Parent Discipleship Handbook**

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WELCOME

Dear Parents,

Welcome to L.I.T.! We are inviting you to join us on an amazing journey with your child. It is our passion and desire that they come to know Christ during this time. God has a unique plan for each child who comes to know Him as Savior and Lord.

When they are born again, they are sealed by the Spirit of God and gifted by God for ministry. Salvation is not the beginning and end of God’s plan for your child’s life. God has a purpose for their lives, and you can help them find their purpose by joining them on their spiritual journey.

God created each child for a personal relationship with Him that is developed by spending time with Him daily. Did you know that daily Bible reading is proven to have a lasting impact on children, and it will carry them through life?¹

Be ready! There WILL be spiritual attacks. You will also be faced with the decision about whether your child has time to spend with God each day, especially when schoolwork and other activities consume your time. Hold on. The attacks and busyness will come, but the Lord will honor you and your family when you put Him first. There will be much spiritual fruit in the days to come.

In Him,
 Dr. Clint May
 President, L.I.T. Ministries

Please take a moment to look at what your family priorities are in the chart below. Write in the amount of time each day that each activity takes. A lot of times, we do not really know until we think about it and write it down. Then, you can see firsthand who or what takes priority in your life. Is it God or other things?

Family Priorities Chart								
Activities	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	WK
School/Homework								
TV/Computer/Electronic Devices								
Sports/Practices/Other Lessons								
Commuting Time								
Bible study/Church/ Church-Related Activities								
Family Time								
Other								
Total Hours								

¹ Jana Magruder, *Nothing Less: Engaging Kids in a Lifetime of Faith* (Nashville, LifeWay: 2017), 49.

JOINING YOUR CHILD ON THEIR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Keep the Pipeline Flowing

Another very important aspect of parenting is keeping your heart right between you and your child. Imagine a pipe that flows from your heart to your child's heart. When our hearts are connected, love flows from your heart to theirs. You want to treat your child's heart with tremendous care and keep the love connection between you and them:

- Avoid using harsh words. Remember, what you say to your child matters and can cause emotional scars.
- Be consistent in your discipline.
- Set boundaries in their lives to make them feel safe.
- Be quick to apologize when you are wrong.
- Always work to keep your relationship close.
- Never allow problems to go unsolved. Take the time to talk it through.
- Have a listening ear. Allow them to share what it is going on in their minds and lives.
- Never have a condemning spirit.
- Listen, listen, listen!

How You Can Successfully Disciple Your Child at Home

“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”
(Deuteronomy 6:6-7)

You might ask the question: How in the world can we add anything to our family schedule? The answer is **live your faith as you go**. Living out your faith with your family does not have to be rocket science. It is a matter of living life together and putting God first in everything you do.

Why Are Spiritual Habits Important?

It is proven that daily reading of Scripture can produce life-sustaining faith in your children. The L.I.T. and Nehemiah Kids devotionals are tools to help your children develop this very important habit. Each devotional takes about 5–15 minutes to go through, depending on your child's reading ability and questions they might ask of you.

Our faith does not have to be complicated if we can get two things right. Everything we learn in the Bible falls into place according to God's perfect plan when we focus on these two things:

- **Number One—Loving God:** “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment.”
- **Number Two—Loving Your Neighbor:** “‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

How can we love God and love our neighbor? By living out The Cross daily.

Loving God (vertical crossbar)

Lordship: Jesus Is Lord (Luke 9:23; Romans 12:1)

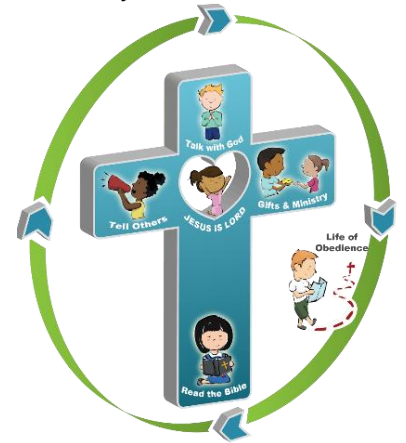
- Your relationship with Christ is first—the highest priority in your family.
- Encourage your child’s personal relationship with Christ to be their highest priority each day.
- Make family worship and church attendance a priority in your life.

Bible Study: Read the Bible (John 14:15; James 1:22)

- Model your love for Christ by allowing your child to see you having your daily quiet times (reading the Bible, worshipping, and praying).
- Help your child make their daily quiet times (N.K./L.I.T. devotionals) a high priority.
- Encourage Scripture memory and help them be successful at it. Beginning on Day One in their devotional book, work with them to learn their memory verse for the week. It can be made easier when they only memorize 2-5 words per day.
- Read God’s Word, memorize it, and do what it says. Apply it!

Prayer and Worship: Talk with God (Jeremiah 33:3)

- Worship together. Find a local Christian radio station or another source of Christian music and listen to it with your child at home and in the car. Sing the songs together and have fun! Saturating your hearts and minds with Christian music reminds you of God’s mercy and grace and develops a habit of worship for life.
- Pray at different times throughout your day.
 - mealtimes
 - bedtime
 - when a need or concern arises (There will always be difficulties that come up. Stop at that moment and pray with your child. This demonstrates to them that God is the One we seek when we have a problem and need help.)
 - Encourage and support your child’s daily quiet times and prayers.
 - Learn to listen to God. Encourage your child to sit quietly (turn off the TV, computer, and other devices) and listen for God to speak to them.



Loving Your Neighbor (horizontal relationship)

Evangelism: Tell Others (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8)

- Invite family, friends, and neighbors to attend church with you.
- Encourage your child to share the message of the Gospel with their friends.
- Hand out Bibles or Gospel tracks to your neighbors.

Service: Gifts and Ministry (1 Corinthians 12:4-5)

- If your child has accepted Christ as Savior and Lord, help them discover their spiritual gifts (see the Spiritual Gifts Test at the back of this handbook). Then, find creative ways for your child to use their gifts.
- Look for opportunities to minister outside your home. Be aware of where God is working and join Him there. Let your child help in whatever ways they can.
- Look for ways your family can bless others. These are memories that will stick with your child for life and teach them how to truly show love to others.

If Your Child Struggles with Reading

Many times, children struggle with reading. If this is the case with your child, read for them or have an older sibling help. Do not allow this to be an excuse for them not getting in the habit of having a daily quiet time. Remember, it only takes five to ten minutes to do a devotional.

If Your Child Has Not Yet Trusted Christ as Savior and Lord

If your child does not yet know Christ, they should still be taught spiritual disciplines and about having a relationship with Christ. By being in the Word of God daily through quiet times and family devotions, they will begin to understand who Jesus is and their need for forgiveness of sins.

Helping Your Child Develop a Personal Quiet Time

You do not want to be doing devotionals without having a sincere devotion to Christ. It is very important that you instill in the heart of your child a hunger for God daily and a desire to meet with their Creator.

Here are a few suggestions to help your child be successful:

1. Find a good time every day when your child can spend time with God.
2. If your child has a lot of homework, have them do their 5- to 15-minute quiet time before they start their homework.
3. Make your child's quiet time a priority for your whole family.
4. Find a quiet place.
5. Pray with your child before they get started on their devotional.
6. Encourage your child to start off by putting on the *Armor of God* every day. (You can even put on the armor in the car on the way to school.)
7. Have your child discuss with the family what they are studying in N.K./L.I.T.
8. Encourage your child to write down their prayer requests and the date in their Prayer Journal located in the back of their devotional.
9. Spend time in prayer together as a family.

Make Scripture Memory Fun

Here are seven steps to help your child memorize Scripture, according to Waylon Moore:

- Begin with a positive attitude.
- Attach the reference to the beginning and end of the first few words of the verse. (Example: “Philippians 4:13—I can do all things—Philippians 4:13”)
- Memorize bit-by-bit. Learn 3-5 words at a time. Add more words each day.
- Review, review, review.
- Meditate on the verse. Say it over and over in your mind. How can you apply it each day?
- Use your free time wisely. Instead of playing video games, spend time memorizing Scripture.
- Team up with a friend. Your Disciple Group is a perfect time to hold each other accountable and memorize your verses together.²

L.I.T. Is a Process

What you do as a parent is key to your child’s spiritual growth. However, your church offers a lot of things you cannot offer at home. The wheel on this page explains the process of L.I.T.

1. **Family:** What you do matters.
2. **Discipleship:** Your child will have a leader at church who will also join your child on their spiritual journey. They will be a positive role model and a person who will reinforce what your child is learning at home.
3. **Ministry Involvement:** Your church family is committed to providing opportunities for your child to train and serve using their spiritual gifts.
4. **Missions:** Every believer including children is called to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20). Your child will learn how to share their faith and be provided with the tools to share the Good News of Christ.



What Your Child Will Do at N.K./L.I.T. Each Week

N.K./L.I.T. will meet weekly for approximately 1½–2 hours for training and small group Bible study (Disciple Group). The schedule is divided into two parts:

1. **Training Time:** During training time, children will be trained in specific areas for ministry.
2. **Disciple Group Time:** During this time, your child will meet in their regular small group to...
 - review their devotionals for the past week

² Waylon B. Moore, *Living God’s Word* (Nashville: LifeWay, 1997), 26–29, as adapted by Thomas D. Lea, *God’s Transforming Word: How to Study Your Bible* (Nashville: LifeWay Press, 1986), 96–112. (Out of print.)

- learn how to apply the lesson to their lives
- spend time as a group in prayer
- be challenged to serve and use their spiritual gifts in the coming week

Expectations of Your Child in N.K./L.I.T.

Your child will be expected to...

- be an example at church and in the community
- complete their daily devotionals and bring their book to Disciple Group every week
- memorize their weekly memory verse each week
- act appropriately while at church
- honor and respect the N.K./L.I.T. leadership
- dress modestly and appropriately at all times
- avoid being concerned with boyfriend-girlfriend relationships

Parent Talk: Developing a Christian Worldview

“You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”
(Deuteronomy 6:7)

There are many beliefs in our world. These beliefs can be considered a person’s worldview. A worldview is how a person determines what they believe about who they are as a person, their purpose for being here on Earth, what they believe to be truth, what they believe about family, and how they view the needs of the world around them.

For the Christian, our view of all these things is guided by what the Bible says. As Christians, we look at things differently because we have a tool that guides us—God’s Word. On sunny days, some people wear sunglasses to filter out the sun’s rays. They find it easier to see with sunglasses on bright days.

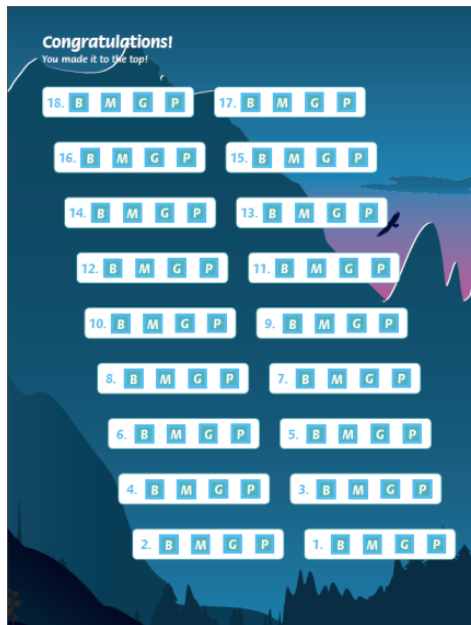
As we live in the world, we need to have a filter to help us determine what is right and wrong. It is like putting on sunglasses to block out the sun’s harmful rays. So, the believer takes up the Bible to discern those views that do not line up with God’s Word.

To help you develop a Christian worldview in your child, we have provided a “Parent Talk” page on the last day of the N.K. (Day 6) and L.I.T. (Day 7) devotionals each week. Take this time at the end of each week to sit down with your child and talk about what God’s Word says about the topic of the week.

N.K./L.I.T. Incentive Plan

In the front of each N.K. and L.I.T. devotional book, you will find incentive pages. This is designed to encourage your child to be diligent in keeping up with their daily devotionals and participating in Disciple Group each week.

Your child will earn stickers each week for doing their daily devotionals, memorizing their weekly memory verse, demonstrating good behavior during Disciple Group, and completing the Parent Talk page with a parent. These pages also provide a picture for your family to see how your child is progressing throughout the semester.



CHILDREN AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS

It is evident throughout the New Testament that God has given many different spiritual gifts to believers. These gifts were given with a preordained purpose: “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10).

As you learn more about the spiritual gifts, you will begin to see one or more in your child’s life if they have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. On the next page you will find a spiritual gift test. Follow the instructions to have an accurate test.

Spiritual Gift Test

Encourage your child to answer the questions below honestly and to the best of their knowledge. This test will help you discover what your child's spiritual gifts are. The test is not 100% accurate; however, it will give you an idea of the gift(s) the Holy Spirit has given them. Spiritual gifts come at a person's point of salvation. So, yes, your child has gifts if they have accepted Jesus as their Savior and Lord! Have your child circle their answers below using the following scale:

1-Never, 2-Almost Never, 3-Sometimes, 4-Most of the Time, 5-Always

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I do not like it when things are unorganized. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. It is easy for me to give money to the church. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I love to help at church. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I am concerned for the lost and think about them all the time. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. I feel like I know the Bible really well and find myself correcting my friends. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. It is easy for me to explain the Bible to my friends in a way that they understand it. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. I love to encourage my friends. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. I am protective of my friends. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. I do not like when I see someone getting hurt by others. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. I believe what the Bible says, and I try my best to do what it says. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. I am a behind-the-scenes person. I would rather help than be out front. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. I love to organize things. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. If my friends do not have money, I have no problem paying their way. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. It is normal for me to want to help at church. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. I love to tell people about Jesus. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. I frequently find myself explaining what the Bible says to my friends and others. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. I love to help people better understand the Bible. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. My friends would say that I am an encourager. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. I love to help my friends grow in their faith. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. I am concerned about others and feel compelled to meet their needs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. When I pray, I truly believe that I will get what I ask for. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. I love working together with others to do ministry in the church. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. Organization comes naturally to me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24. I like giving money to the church. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25. It is easy for me to take on a task and finish it. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 26. There isn't a day that goes by that I don't think about telling others about Jesus. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27. I really enjoy speaking before a group. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

28. I don't like it when I see someone down. I want to build them up.	1	2	3	4	5
29. It is easy for me to explain the Bible to others.	1	2	3	4	5
30. I notice when someone is missing at church.	1	2	3	4	5
31. When someone shares that they are hurting, I find myself concerned for them.	1	2	3	4	5
32. If the Bible says it. I believe it.	1	2	3	4	5
33. It is normal for me to serve in the church and to help out where needed.	1	2	3	4	5
34. I can't stand to see something unorganized, and I will step in to try to fix it.	1	2	3	4	5
35. I feel compelled to give money to missions.	1	2	3	4	5
36. When I see someone in need, I want to help.	1	2	3	4	5
37. My friends have heard me tell them about Jesus on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4	5
38. I think about being a pastor one day.	1	2	3	4	5
39. I love to teach my friends Bible truths.	1	2	3	4	5
40. It is normal for me to encourage people in their faith.	1	2	3	4	5
41. It is natural for me to lead. I am a leader amongst my friends.	1	2	3	4	5
42. It is natural for me to help others in need.	1	2	3	4	5
43. When I read the Bible, I believe and accept what it says.	1	2	3	4	5
44. I want to help others to be successful.	1	2	3	4	5
45. It comes naturally to me to organize things and put them into order.	1	2	3	4	5
46. I don't think twice about giving to someone in need.	1	2	3	4	5
47. I love to help out at church when there is a need.	1	2	3	4	5
48. I am fearless in sharing my faith with the lost.	1	2	3	4	5
49. I find myself thinking about teaching others.	1	2	3	4	5
50. I want to teach my friends and others about the Bible.	1	2	3	4	5
51. I find it natural to build my friends up.	1	2	3	4	5
52. When my friends are hurting, I want to be with them to encourage them and build them up.	1	2	3	4	5
53. When I see someone in need, I want to help them.	1	2	3	4	5
54. When I pray, I know that God will answer me.	1	2	3	4	5
55. I am comfortable supporting other people as they minister for God.	1	2	3	4	5

(Score the test on the next page.)

Score Your Child's Spiritual Gift Test

Turn back to the beginning of the test and write your child's scores on this page beside the appropriate numbers. After you have all of the scores written in the correct boxes, add the numbers together across each line, and write the total in the far-right column. When you are done, you will see what your child's spiritual gifts are by looking at the lines with the highest totals. There may be one or more.

					TOTALS
GIFT OF ORGANIZATION/ADMINISTRATION					
1	12	23	34	45	
GIFT OF GIVING					
2	13	24	35	46	
GIFT OF SERVICE					
3	14	25	36	47	
GIFT OF EVANGELISM					
4	15	26	37	48	
GIFT OF PROPHECY					
5	16	27	38	49	
GIFT OF TEACHING					
6	17	28	39	50	
GIFT OF ENCOURAGEMENT					
7	18	29	40	51	
GIFT OF SHEPHERD/LEADERSHIP					
8	19	30	41	52	
GIFT OF MERCY					
9	20	31	42	53	
GIFT OF FAITH					
10	21	32	43	54	
GIFT OF HELPS					
11	22	33	44	55	

Definitions of Spiritual Gifts

1. **Organization/Administration:** Titus was to organize the ministry in Crete. In 1 Corinthians 12:28, there is a list of spiritual gifts that includes administration. The person with this gift helps the church organize itself so it can effectively minister to its own members and to others out in the world.
2. **Giving:** The gift of giving expresses itself in a desire to give above and beyond our ten percent tithe. The person with this gift finds it easy to give freely and is very cheerful in doing so.
3. **Service:** The gift of service expresses itself in a desire to serve others. The person with this gift finds it easy to be a servant in the church and finds great joy and fulfillment in doing so.
4. **Evangelism:** The gift of evangelism is the ability to explain clearly to lost people how to become Christians and to persuade them to desire to be saved.
5. **Prophecy:** The gift of prophecy enables a person to speak God's Word boldly so that it brings conviction of sin. Prophets speak to people and confront them concerning sin.
6. **Teaching:** The gift of teaching is the ability to teach Bible truths in a way that others might understand and be built up in their faith.
7. **Encouragement/Exhortation:** Romans 12:6-8 lists several gifts of the Spirit, including the gift of encouragement, or exhortation. It is given to build up the body of Christ. The person with the gift of encouragement easily edifies other people, helps build confidence, and reminds Christians of the hope they have in Christ.
8. **Shepherd/Leadership:** The gift of a shepherd is to lead, guide, and feed the flock of God, which is the church. The shepherd, or pastor, is gifted by the Holy Spirit to be a leader. He has the ability and desire to teach, protect, and build up the church.
9. **Mercy:** Those who have the gift of mercy see the needs of others and find it easy to help them. They are aware of people's needs around them.
10. **Faith:** The gift of faith is an unwavering trust in what God promises. The person with the gift of faith believes that God will be faithful to His Word.
11. **Helps:** Christians with the gift of helps are those who like to work to assist or help another person's ministry. They usually work behind the scenes.