



Empowering parents to be the spiritual  
heroes of their home

A discipleship guide written to equip and support parents as they disciple  
their children from birth to twelfth grade.

Written by Cameron Engle  
Troy First Baptist Church \Troy, NC

## D6 Map

“What is the best way to disciple our children today?” There are seminars often taught on this topic, entire ministries focused on it, and college and graduate level concentrations dedicated to finding the discipleship solutions for the 21st century. We have even developed many different ways on how to best “do” youth and children's ministries. I believe that although we have sought how to best minister to our students and families with good intentions, at times we have forgotten our main command about discipleship from God himself. Believe it or not, God never said to correctly raise a child, you must give them kool aid and cookies followed by a 5-minute devotion. God never commissioned the church to put on spectacular events to attract teens away from the world, and towards God. When Jesus said in Matthew 19, “Let the little Children come to me...” Jesus wasn't actually starting a game of kickball with intentions of a short devotion afterward. Believe it or not, the New Testament churches developed in Acts didn't even have a gaga ball pit! Now I am not the pastor who is advocating for no fun or laughing, and only strict Bible study style ministries. Games and fellowship have an important place in all ministries and are needed. What I am advocating is that too many churches have allowed their events and programs to replace home discipleship. I am advocating that we remember the only way that God calls us to disciple the younger generation.

God gives us his original blueprint for discipleship in Deuteronomy 6:4-9. I encourage you to take a minute to read these verses. Moses is giving us two commands here: 1) Parents, disciple your children. 2) Church, support the parents. God's plan, instructions, and demands for how to raise a child could be this simple. Our motto here at Troy First is, ***Empowering parents to be the spiritual heroes of their home***. Believe it or not, discipleship can be simple. Maybe current-day discipleship strategies fail because we complicate what God has simplified. We find this simplicity in Deuteronomy 6. God means for our faith to be generational.

In his book *Shift*, Brian Haynes says that Generation Z is projected to be one of the most faithless generations in America. In fact, 1/3 of all Gen. Z

incoming college freshmen do not identify with a religion at all.<sup>1</sup> To equip the generations effectively, the church must equip and support the parents, not attempt to take discipleship away from parents.

For the New Testament church, faith and family were inseparable. Every relationship and decision was made through faith. How many decisions do today's parents make through faith? Almost all parents today make decisions for their child's life not to strengthen their relationship with Jesus, but to get into a prestigious college or to prepare them for future academics and paychecks. Yes, these are important parts of our children's lives, but if we don't exemplify spiritual priority in our children's lives, then who will? Will the church, pastor, coach, or teacher do it for you? You are the one who God calls to create a faith-based environment for your child. If we raise a child and show them how to live their whole life and plan for their future, while only attending church, we are showing them how to fail at life, relationships, and faith.

Parents, we try our hardest to create a road map for our children to follow and become successful. Why do we not also create a spiritual map for our child's faith development? This is exactly why we have developed the D6 Map at Troy First Baptist. We want to give you this map so that you can take spiritual charge of your child's life.

The D6 Map works like this. We have planned out some important topics that God calls you to approach with your child. We want to give you the big topics with your child, and help you with when and how to teach them. Every few years we will give you a milestone topic to discuss with your child. But before we dig into the milestones for your children, let's first discuss the most important cornerstone of your family.

---

<sup>1</sup>Sean McDowell, *9 Important Things about Generation Z*, "Josh McDowell Ministries, 2016.

## The Most Important Foundation: Your Marriage

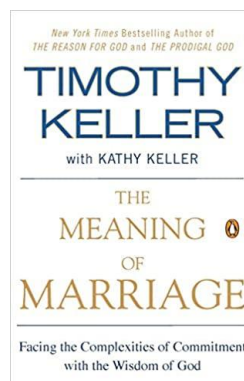
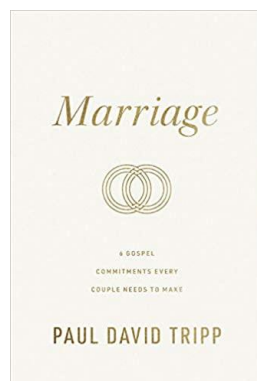
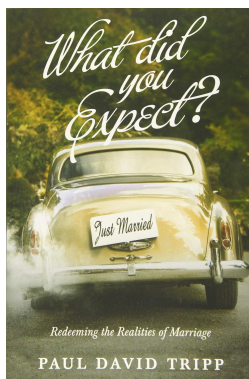
### Ephesians 5:25-33

Before we get into the discipleship map, we want to bring your focus to the most important aspect in discipling your child: your marriage. Too many married couples stop being spouses to be parents. These couples feel like sacrificing their marriage to parent is necessary, but it is unbiblical and ungodly. Even if you do everything else spiritually right in discipling your child, showing them the example of a deserted marriage for years will set them up for failure later in life.

Strong marriages created strong families. Do you want to be a better parent? Do you want to show your child how to truly love? Do you want your child to actually feel loved? Do you want to exemplify God's plan for your child's life? Do you want to disciple your child biblically? Then don't start with the D6 map. Don't start with parenting books or family articles. The first step for your family's success is found in your marriage, not in your ability to parent.

\*\*\*The child that grows up asking the question "Does daddy really love mommy?" is the child who puts less stock in their parents' love. The child who never questions their parents' love for each other is the child who never doubts their parents' love towards them.

### Resources:



## **Milestone 1: Birth of a baby**

### **Psalm 127:3-5**

The name "D6 Map" comes from the Scripture Deuteronomy 6. Take a moment and read verses 4-9. Look at the commands here. First, love the Lord. This is the Scripture that Jesus referenced in Matthew 22:37 when he is asked, "What is the greatest commandment?" We are called to love God, obey God, and teach our children how to do the same. In this text, Moses explains to us how critical it is that the parents are the primary faith influence in a child's life. The command means to teach our children continually (v.7) as you go through life with them, and live as a good example for them. (v.8) At the same time, Moses is also talking to the entire nation of Israel to support the parents with this important task.

Discipling our children takes intentionality from both the parents and the church. This is a partnership that you and your future children need. It takes an **intentional** village to raise our kids. It has never been harder to raise children than it is today. Solo parenting is scary and lonely. Come partner with us!

This is also a great time to come up with a family mission statement that you can put on a wall of your home as a constant reminder of your purpose as a family.

### **Baby Dedication/Parent Connection**

We celebrate this milestone a couple different ways. The first is a baby dedication. The act of a baby dedication is actually a commitment on the parents' part to celebrate Milestone 1. This connects new parents with the magnificent responsibility and opportunity of leading their children spiritually. (This is treated the same way if this parenthood is through birth or adoption.) The thought of being new parents is a moment of excitement

and anxiety at the same time. The church's job is to celebrate with the couple and support them through such a new experience. This is a unique milestone, because it only focuses on the parents' development.

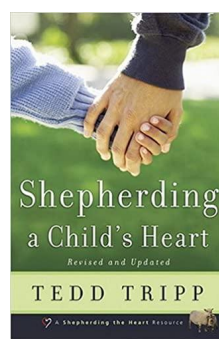
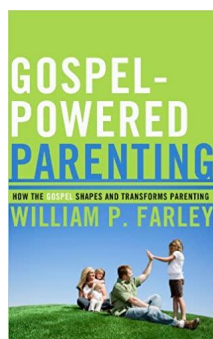
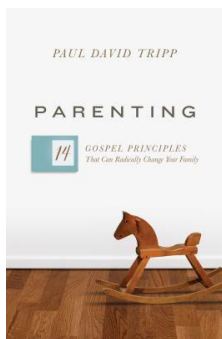
The second way we celebrate this milestone is to help you make a parent connection with experienced parents. These can be parents who are currently raising children or have children who are grown. We will help you connect with this couple and set up a lunch so that you can begin a strong bond and partnership with them.

One of the pastors will discuss with you what the baby dedication will look like. This is also a great time to start intentional times of prayer and devotion as a family.

### **Resources:**

-Talk to us about counseling opportunities (Remember, counseling doesn't necessarily mean something is bad or wrong. It simply means you want your family to be the best it can be.)

Check out these books...



## **Milestone 2: The Gospel Story (PreK-Grade 1)**

### **John 3:16**

The second milestone we are going to look at is the gospel story. This milestone is focused on Prek-Grade 1. This is a great age to start evaluating where your child is with beginning to understand the gospel story. The better your child understands the gospel, the more the gospel will impact your child during the crucial years of them developing their identity. We need to understand that sharing the gospel with our children is a process. If you explain the game of basketball to a child, don't expect them to be able to shoot a 3-pointer on their first try. You have to teach them how to dribble, how to hold the ball, and you practice the sport with them. Don't worry just yet about focusing on if they are ready to make Jesus their Lord. Process the gospel story with them. Start laying out your child's faith foundation today.

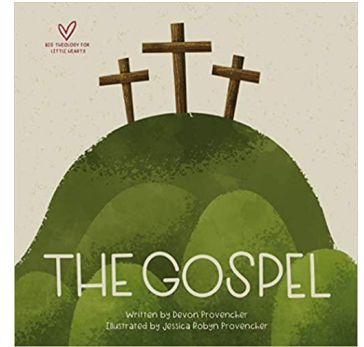
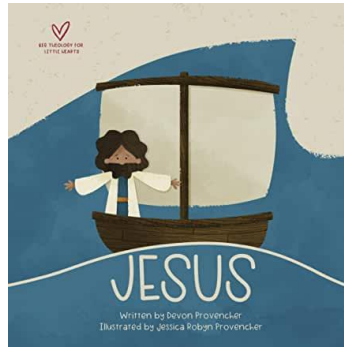
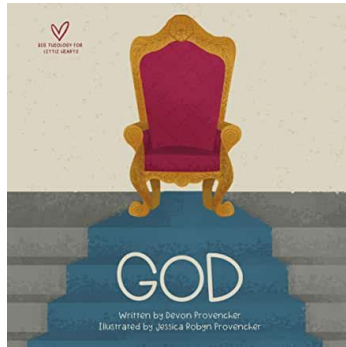
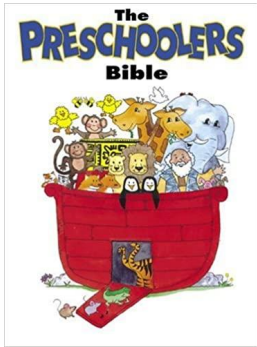
### **Story Time**

Here is how we can powerfully and simply add the gospel story to your child's life. Almost every child and parent this age has story time before bed. What an incredible and intimate moment that is to have with your child. But this is also a huge opportunity to focus on their spiritual formation. Use these stories that you read together to tie into the gospel. Apply the main lesson or topic of the story to Jesus's story, and don't be afraid to use the Bible itself for your story time. What is important is to pay attention to your child as they hear the gospel story. Ask your child questions to help with evaluation:

- How does that story make you think of Jesus?
- Who in this story reminds us of Jesus? Why?
- Who in the story do you think Jesus wouldn't be happy with? Why?

Feel free to make up your own questions that will help you evaluate your child's understanding of the gospel story.

## Resources:





### **Milestone 3: Identity (Grade 2-3)**

#### **1 Peter 2:9**

Through grades 2 and 3, we are going to focus on identity. Our goal is before your child begins their fourth grade year, that they will have an idea of what it means that they are made in Christ's image, and how to be a son or daughter of God. Second and third grade is when we can really start looking for and capitalizing on God sightings in our child's life. Brian Hanes defines God sightings<sup>2</sup> as opportunities that come up in life when we as parents can use informal ways to teach our children about God and who they are in Christ. If you keep your eyes open, I bet you will start noticing these sightings on a monthly or even weekly basis! But we will never see them if we don't open our eyes. The word in the Bible for image is similar to what we see when we look at a statute. It can be powerful to point at a statute or our own shadow and explain what it is to be made in the image of something else.

2nd and 3rd grade is not too early to start explaining what it means to be a man or woman of God, and show our child who God calls them to be.

-- To be a man is to be a head servant. God calls men specifically to lead as a servant and to show what a servant's life looks like. How to treat a girl with respect and to always look out for them and everyone around us.

Understand that being strong means to rely on Christ.

--To be a woman is to show real respect for others. To understand that beauty is nothing if it's not defined in the words of God and backed up by a beautiful heart. No one else should have any say about her worth other than Jesus Christ. She should have so much confidence in herself because she is created in God's image.

---

<sup>2</sup>Hanes, Brian, *Shift: What it takes to finally reach families today*, Loveland, CO: Group, 2009.

Explain to your child why it is that Christians are supposed to live differently than other people. These actions not only obey God, but they show everyone else an example of who God is.

This is a lot to go over. Much like all of the milestones, this is not a one-time conversation. This is a process of conversations. Once again, our evaluation of how the gospel is impacting our children is important to use!

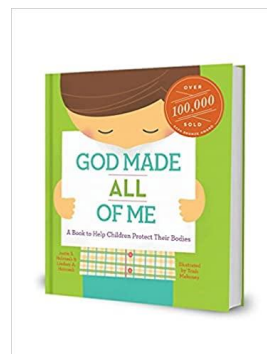
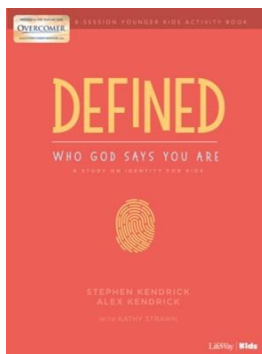
### **God Sightings:**

Pay attention to every-day events and situations that we can use as God sightings. Also pay attention to what your child's interests are. If your child loves a sport, help them understand that the more we practice swinging a bat, the better we get. This is true for how we live for Jesus as well. Parents, repetition is a powerful tool to use with our young children. You can also make intentional plans to use a day trip. If you take your child to a museum or park, explain to them the illustration of the statute and God's image.

### **Resources:**

Check out this article:

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/help-kids-recognize-their-identity-in-christ/>



## **Milestone 4: Faith Commitment** (No particular age)

**Ephesians 2:8**

**Mark 10:14-15**

Children growing up in the context of a Christian family are likely to make their public claim to faith when they are between the ages of 7-13. Based on Milestone 2, we know that you are the one who is introducing your child to the idea of the gospel and the story of Jesus. Ever since then, you have been praying like crazy for your child's spiritual development and especially for their salvation. If you have served in the position of spiritual leader in your child's life, they will likely include you in the process of making a commitment of faith and receiving Jesus as Lord of their life. You do not know when and where your child will make this profession of faith. It may be with a pastor, friend, or another relative. And if they do not make that profession with you right next to them, then that is okay! Your job is not to make sure your child professes Christ right next to you or at a specific time. Your job is to confirm that proclamation they made. You need to answer the question: "Does my son or daughter fully understand what this commitment is?"

We should ask our child some specific questions:

- What is Jesus' story? Why do we need Jesus?
- What do you think it means to be saved?
- What does it mean to be a Christian?
- How does your life change when you start living for Jesus?

We will love to help you confirm your child's profession of faith. We also celebrate your child's salvation through baptism in the presence of other believers. We would love to help you explain baptism to your child as well.

### Spiritual Birthday Party

Throw a spiritual birthday party for your child. This can be a big party, or a small gathering with immediate family. Yes, this may be a bit cheesy. Your

child needs to know that this is not only an important step in their life, but that you will support them spiritually in their life. We should rethink our parenting style when we choose to celebrate our kid's academic and athletic accomplishments in their life, but are less than enthusiastic when it comes to their salvation or spiritual development. This party and public display of faith is a great illustration for what baptism is as well. Not to mention, this is a great opportunity to invite your neighbors who may not know Jesus to something that could change their lives.

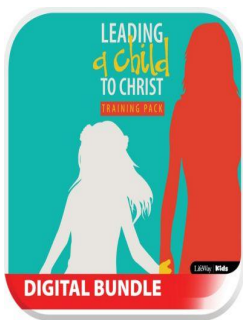
### Resources:

Check out these articles!

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/leading-your-child-to-christ/>

<https://servehq.church/blog/how-to-explain-salvation-to-a-child/>

<https://kidsministry.lifeway.com/2014/09/12/how-to-explain-salvation-and-baptism-to-kids/>



## **Milestone 5: Spiritual Growth (Grade 4-5)**

### **1 Timothy 4:12-16**

As parents, we always need to be rethinking how we connect with our children and lead them spiritually. Take this time to evaluate what your child understands from the past two years of teaching them about their identity in Christ. We will start to build off of Milestone 3 and the topic of identity and show your kid, as a child of God, that they need to always be growing in their relationship with God. A great way to do this is through spiritual disciplines. Start with obvious spiritual disciplines as a family like Bible reading, prayer, or service. We need to understand that we cannot lead and teach our children how to do something that we don't already do in our lives.

We need to explain to our kids that we need these disciplines to help us fully dedicate our lives to Christ and become the person who God wants us to become. Remember to use the God sightings and use the disciplines to evaluate your kid's spiritual walk. Parents we need to remind ourselves that our salvation experience is not the end of our spiritual journey, but only the beginning!

What Spiritual discipline do you think would be a good one for your family to start with together? Here are some disciplines to consider:

-Prayer, Scripture memorization, Scripture reading, meditation, journaling, simplicity, confession, gratitude, self-examination, celebration, submissiveness.

### Road Trip/Overnight getaway

The event we encourage you to do with your child for this milestone is a spiritual trip for both of these years of your child's life. Take a family trip, father/daughter trip, or mother/son trip somewhere. This can be the beach, the mountains, or camping in the woods. Take a trip, and focus on one or a few spiritual disciplines and how to introduce them in your life. Take some

specific time during this trip to pray, read Scripture, serve, study, spend time in simplicity, solitude, or other disciplines. This is also a great time to discuss what is going on in your kid's life. Ask them some questions to get a feel of where they think they are spiritually:

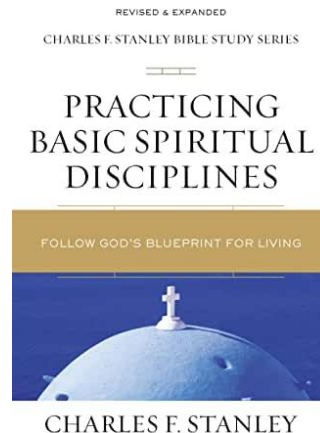
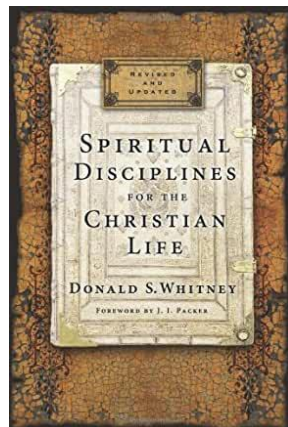
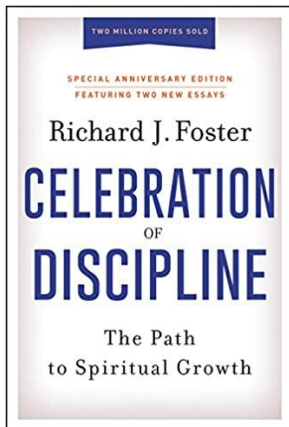
-How do disciplines like these help us become who God wants us to be?

-What is your relationship with God like? Where do you think it should be?

-Who does God say you are?

-How do you think we should use these disciplines going forward in our lives?

## Resources:



## **Milestone 6 Testimony (Grade 6)**

Does your child know your story? Do they know where you came from or how you got to where you are today? What about your spiritual story? You may be surprised to find out that there are many “churched” kids who have never heard their parents’ testimony. If it is our job to share our story and Jesus’ story while we are on this earth, then how much more are we called to share our testimony to our own children! For multiple reasons, many parents are intimidated when it comes to sharing their story in an intimate moment with their child. We are going to change that! Our goal for this Milestone is to fully equip you to share your story first, with your child, then with anyone who you come in contact with. You have a powerful story that can change someone’s life forever. It’s time we start using that story! We would love to meet up with you and help you be able to articulate your story before you share it with your child. We can help you find the words to express your words and even apply your story with Jesus’ story. We also have some resources below to help you with this milestone.

### Share Your Testimony

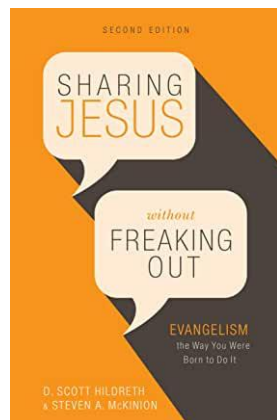
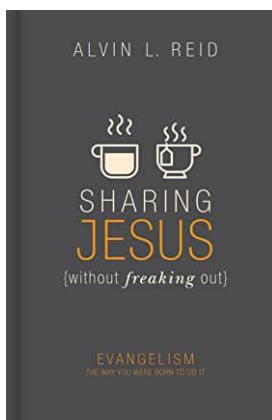
You have spent years sharing the gospel with your child and praying for them. Now it is time to have a sit down conversation about your testimony with your son or daughter. You can approach this milestone many different ways, but pick what suits your child the best. Does your daughter love basketball? Take her to the park and shoot with her or rebound for her while you talk. Does your son enjoy golf? Take him to the driving range. Just make sure you take some time that day to discuss your testimony with your kid. Ask your child what they think their story is. Help them relate their story to yours and Jesus’ story. Don’t make this time too formal, and find a relaxed and good environment that allows you all to conversate and connect. You can do this with one or both parents. Lastly, we urge you to not try to give a presentation to your child. Just have a simple conversation about what your life was like before

you met God, when you met God, and your life since you met God. Let them ask questions as you discuss. Remember it's okay to stutter and be nervous when sharing your testimony with your child. What's not okay is keeping your relationship with Jesus a secret from your child. Believe it or not, many parents do.

### **Resources:**

We have hosted a class on how to share your testimony. The lessons and material from this class is available at your request.

We also have a PDF available on our website under our parent tab that you can download.





## **Milestone 7: Physical Obedience (Grade 7)**

### **1 Corinthians 6:19-20**

In many public schools, your child will be taught about sex through the school system. I guarantee you they will not use any Scripture, spiritual reasoning, or C. S. Lewis quotes in their education seminars with your child. What they will teach is the normality of sexual feelings and encounters, and the dangers of STDs. We need to teach our children the emphasis that the Bible puts on sexuality, the reasoning for why God gave us sex as a gift, and how we can glorify God with this gift. We don't need to teach our kids that sex is bad when God says quite the opposite. We need to teach them how we are supposed to use this gift from God and what we should be doing in the meantime until we can enjoy that gift. Don't simply tell your child to avoid something, give them something to do as well. Our children are called to have a sexually dedicated relationship with a spouse some day. In the meantime, we should encourage them to continue striving to become the man or woman that God calls them to be. We should also take a minute to explain the physical changes that our children are going through, or will be going through soon.

The best way to discuss this topic with your child is to not only focus on sex, but on physical obedience. God calls us to give him physical obedience with our body, mind, and actions. Sex is merely one example of the physical obedience God calls us to. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 says that the body is a temple. This has many more implications than just sexual. Yes, God calls our children to abstain from sex outside of marriage. But there are many things that God calls our children to do with their body like missions, evangelism, self-evaluation, exercise, discipleship.

### Body Commitment

We have written a contract that you and your child can go over together. We would encourage families to pair sons with fathers/spiritual fathers and daughters with mothers/spiritual mothers. The contract doesn't focus on only sex, but it's an overall understanding that we need to use our body for

the sake of God's Kingdom. Have the pre-teen sign this promise to God (this should not merely be a promise to the parents) and also take a minute to explain that we very well may break this promise to God in one way or another. (We may sometimes lie, cheat on a test, or lust.) But God will forgive us, and we will continue pursuing this promise for Him. Like all the other milestones, find a way to do this that takes a little of the awkward away. Play putt putt or throw a football or softball together while having this conversation. Remember to use questions like:

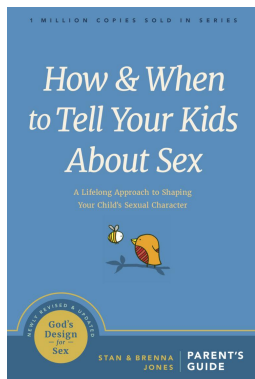
- Why do you think God created sex?
- What have you heard about sex? Do you think it's a bad thing?
- What does the Bible tell us about sex?
- What do you think sex does for a marriage?

## Resources:

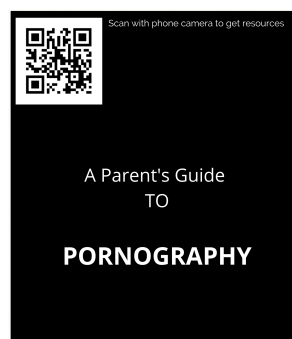
<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/talking-about-sex-and-puberty/>

<https://christianmarriageadventure.com/teach-your-child-about-sex/>

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/modesty-misunderstood>



axis



axis

## **Milestone 8: Blessing Ceremony (Grade 8)**

### **1 Corinthians 13:11**

The growth from a child to an adult is a continual process. An area where many parents fail with their children is in giving their blessing. Many parents do not verbally give their child their blessing, or even realize that they have a blessing to give! The danger in ignoring this Milestone is simple: if we never begin treating our child like an adult, then they will never become one. Giving your teenager a blessing will unleash them to live out their identity from God. It will free them to take on the world with your approval. Let's give our child a blessing and invoke our favor on them as we approve of their identity and give them God's vision for their future.

The purpose of the blessing is to encourage your child to live their own personal life for Jesus. You are going to give them some promises and declarations, and at the same time asking God to bless their life:

- Promise to them your unwavering love and support. Encourage them that your love and acceptance will never be something they must earn.

- Release them to live a life that is only based on God's calling on their life, without any of your personal desires or selfishness getting in the way.

- Explain to them how you see God working in their life. This is a big one!!

- Explain to your child that you try to remind yourself that they belong to God before they belong to you.

- Explain that you and God both declare their high value.

- Give them a picture of the vision that God has for their future and claim God's power on that future.

- Call your child to constant and active commitment to God in their life. Promise to use your home to support and equip this calling.

- Pray over your child and his/her future and pray out loud to God this blessing you are placing on your child.

These are all words that **NEED** to be said out loud. Do not assume your child knows these things. Your words will release them to live out their calling.

## Blessing Ceremony

This will look very different for every student. If your child is an extrovert, throw them a party for their birthday and add this blessing to it. If your child is shy, do this as a family dinner or write your child a letter. Just make sure to do whatever fits your child, and include them in on the planning. Plan the event out, and pray that your son or daughter will be able to understand what your blessing means, and that they will become inspired by that blessing to be who they are meant to be. Remember, your child needs to understand that they have your blessing not based on their performance, but based on your love for them!

## **Resources:**

This is a powerful article that explains where the idea of blessing comes from:

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/how-to-bless-your-child/>

Other articles:

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/a-written-blessing/>

<http://homefrontmag.com/how-to-give-a-blessing-to-your-child/>

## **Milestone 9: Driving Contract (Grade 9)**

9th grade is by far one of the scariest years for a parent. Handing your son or daughter the keys to a car and watching them get behind the wheel can be a terrifying and emotional reality. But this milestone is not really about driving. When your child gets their license, there is a massive shift in your relationship that you are going to need God's help to get through. They are about to spend a lot more time away from you and experience their first dose of freedom and independence. This will also be the first real opportunity for us as parents to gauge our child's moral compass. The goal for this contract is actually for you to establish a system of trust with one another and repair any broken trust from the past.

### Driving Contract

This contract will allow the parent to do three things:

- 1- Communicate clearly so they know your expectations.
- 2- Establish or build off of a system of trust.
- 3- Utilize this contract to have a greater discussion. You have an opportunity here to show how your relationship will work as you grant your child more and more freedom.

This is the perfect time to talk with your child about trust, freedom, and privacy. These are all things that the world tells our 15 and 16 year-olds that they are owed. This is a time for us to gently remind them that these things, especially freedom and privacy, are privileges that can and should be taken away in certain situations instead of rights that students are born with. What a student does with their freedom directly expresses what kind of relationship they have with their savior.

If you have not done so yet, this may also be a good time to implement a phone/technology contract as well. These contracts are available on our church website.

**Resources:**

Check out these articles:

<https://www.crosswalk.com/family/parenting/spiritual-lessons-from-teaching-your-teens-to-drive.html>

<https://www.csmonitor.com/2000/0913/p18s1.html>

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/is-your-teen-ready-to-drive/>

## **Milestone 10: Family Tree (Grade 10)**

We have a responsibility as parents to help our children understand where they come from. The story of our family is the story of us. It is what we belong to, and it has a say in who we are. One of the best ways you can help your 11th grader discover their identity is to lead them to discover their family heritage. Whether the story of your family is a page-turning novel, a comedy sketch, or even if it reads like a police report, your teenager needs to hear the good, the bad, and the ugly about your family. This is also a good time to develop a family mission statement if you don't have one yet as well.

Taking a look at your family's past can be incredibly powerful. The entire purpose of the D6 map is to encourage your parenting to make a generational change. So the talking during this research should be intentional. Show your child how some of your ancestors were strong believers, and how some of them lacked faith. And show how those ancestors impacted the generation after them. Explain that you want them to become a generational discipler. Family trees are important so you can see where your family has been, but they do not determine who you are today. This is a great time to bring up the blessing that you gave your child in milestone 8.

### Family Tree Dinner Questions

Have your teen ask questions about your family tree with different family members. Tell the family members to get out the scrap books! You will go over these answers during dinner. You can have this dinner with other family members if you'd like. As the dinner continues, go over your family's history. You can go as far back as you'd like. This is also a perfect time to hand over a family heirloom to your child. Depending on who your child is, it can also be powerful to do some internet research and look at your family tree.

**Resources:**

Here are some family heritage websites you can use:

My Heritage

Ancestry DNA

Find my Past

One Great Family



## Milestone 11: Money Matters (Grade 11)

### Proverbs 13:11

The Bible talks about money more than any other subject. In fact there are over 800 Scriptures in the Bible that address the topic of money. Many students will graduate High School and never realize or be told that God has a specific plan for them when it comes to money. This milestone will actually give you an opportunity to have your child understand the budget and how money works and moves in your household.

### Monthly Family Budget

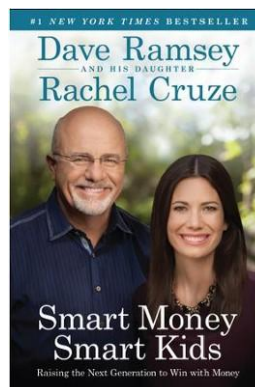
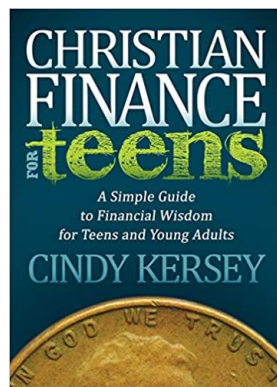
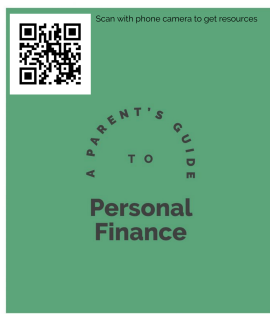
When planning the event for this milestone, pick a night that you and your student have free. Take the budget sheet, and have your child attempt to fill it out to what they think belongs in each line. After they are done, compare their sheet with the family's actual budget and notice the differences. Give them 8 biblical principles on money:

- Work Hard -Earn Money -Give a Tithe Back to God First -Save Money  
-Avoid Debt -Be Generous with God's Money -Be Content -Do Not Let Money Become Your Master.

Go over what the Bible has to say about money. At the end of the discussion, let them know you believe in them when it comes to money, and if you are able, give them a financial gift. The gift doesn't have to be substantial, but the image of being handed money will be powerful.

### Resources:

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/teaching-your-kids-about-money/>



## **Milestone 12: Graduation Ceremony**

This is a milestone we would like to celebrate with you on a special Sunday at the church. We will have a specific time for you to celebrate your child's stepping into adulthood during our ceremony at church. This is not simply celebrating graduation from High School. This is a time to truly open up to your child and let them know how proud of them you are and how you believe they will thrive in the upcoming years. This milestone is a building off the same idea as the blessing in milestone 8. You are now giving them a blessing to further their independence as a young man/woman of God.

### Graduation Ceremony

We will provide your family a meal after the morning service on a Sunday. This is a great time of celebration. We will give your child a memorable gift, but we would like to ask that you add to that gift in a very special way. Along with the gift, we would like to give that child a hand-written note or card from you, their parents. You can do this individually or together. This is a perfect time to be vulnerable and relay many of the aspects from your blessing in milestone 8. Make sure to mention a few things:

- Acknowledge them as a fully realized adult.
- Promise them your continued love and support.
- Spend more time celebrating their **identity** than you do on their

#### **accomplishments.**

- Give them your expectations as an adult follower of Christ.
- Release them to continue to live God's calling on their life.
- Give them a vision of what their continued dedication to God should look like.

Paint the picture of your vision for their future.

- Assure them of their continued high value.
- Pray over your child and his/her future and pray out loud to God this blessing you are placing on your child.

Risk vulnerability with this milestone! Spend your student's last High School year continuing to look for those God sightings and leading them spiritually. There is likely some internal work that you will need to do as the parents to help yourself understand that your relationship with your child is about to

change forever. This is something you need to seek to talk about with a friend, pastor, or counselor. The reminder we need during this milestone is that our child was never really ours in the first place. They have been and always will be God's.