

## CoreGroup Guide | The Christian Parent's Field Guide - Part 2

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### From Pastor Charity

ICYMI, catch the [recording of the One CoreGroup One Day event](#). And yes, we sang Proud Mary. 240 people showed up!

Keep the CoreGroup feelin' by hosting a [Summer Hang](#) to meet new people just for the heck of it, or you might consider inviting them to your group this fall after hanging this summer.

### Welcome

Kids grow fast, and as they get older they need a whole new set of things from the adults in their lives. This week we will explore the role of parents as a coach in their child's spiritual development. We will talk about how to balance teaching and supporting kids while also giving them space to grow and make decisions for themselves.

### Opening Prayer

Gracious God, you are our perfect parent. Your love is the model for how we want to love our own children. Help us to grow in our understanding of you so that we can pass that on to the next generation. Amen.

### Ice Breaker

What superlative did you get in high school (most likely to succeed, class clown, most athletic, etc.)? What superlative would you give yourself today (and feel free to get creative!)?

### The Head

In the Bible we have very few stories about Jesus as a kid or teenager, so it would make sense that we are to pay close attention to the few that we do have. This glimpse into Jesus' family life might feel surprisingly relatable to the parents reading it. It also gives us a picture of a young person engaging with faith for themselves.

#### Luke 2:41-50

*<sup>41</sup> Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. <sup>42</sup> And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. <sup>43</sup> When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents were unaware of this. <sup>44</sup> Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. <sup>45</sup> When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. <sup>46</sup> After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. <sup>47</sup>*

*And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. <sup>48</sup> When his parents saw him they were astonished, and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously looking for you." <sup>49</sup> He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" <sup>50</sup> But they did not understand what he said to them.*

- How do you think Mary and Joseph felt during the search for their missing child?
- What do you notice about where Jesus was found and what he was up to?

Another great example for raising up the next generation in the Bible is Paul. Part of his ministry was guiding and teaching younger leaders. Some of Paul's most famous words to one of his mentees, Timothy, can remind us of the power of a young person's faith.

### **1 Timothy 4:6-14**

*<sup>12</sup> Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young. Instead, set an example for the believers through your speech, behavior, love, faith, and by being sexually pure. <sup>13</sup> Until I arrive, pay attention to public reading, preaching, and teaching. <sup>14</sup> Don't neglect the spiritual gift in you that was given through prophecy when the elders laid hands on you.*

- Why do you think people sometimes look down on the young, especially in churches?
- In what ways can we affirm and follow the example of the young people around us?

### **The Heart**

Coaches are a great representation of the way parenting changes as our kids grow. We all know how many adults it takes to manage the chaos of a tee ball game. But with time our kids begin to need less from us as adults, and take on more responsibility for themselves. This doesn't mean we leave our kids all alone to figure out their faith, but it does mean we practice taking small steps back so our kids can make their own decisions around faith.

- Why do you think it is difficult to give kids space to explore their faith on their own?
- When you consider what you want to pass on to the children in your life, what aspect of faith are the most meaningful to you?
- What benefits can be gained by young adults who experience faith with adults outside of their immediate/extended family (like Jesus had when he was in the temple)?
- While coaches don't take the field with their players, they are always present. How can you demonstrate presence for the young people in your life?

### **The Hands**

A theme we will continue to circle back to during this series is the idea that it takes a village to raise a child. This is a great time as adults to think about how we can share the load of raising up the next generation of our church.

- Coaches are known for helping their players develop fundamental skills. What fundamentals of faith can you pass down to the kids in your life?
- What are some visible signs that a kid is taking ownership of their faith?

- Coaches share their insights from the sidelines. Share a scenario where you stepped back and allowed a child to act independently.
- One way to give your child space to explore faith is to introduce them to other adults who can be a part of their journey.
  - Who do you know who could play this role for you kids?
  - Are there young people who are not your children, who you could help coach up in the faith?

## Closing Prayer

Holy God, we are mindful of what precious gifts you have given us in our children. We thank you for your presence with us, and ask you for guidance when we feel overwhelmed by the task of raising them to love you. Help us to trust you with our kids as they ask questions, try new things, and explore their faith. Amen.

## Going Deeper

The memory verse for this series is Proverbs 22:6 from the Common English Bible (CEB):

*Train children in the way they should go;  
when they grow old, they won't depart from it.*

Here are three simple ways to practice memorizing a verse:

1. **Write it** (one time a day on a notecard, in your notes app, or on your mirror).
2. **Say it out loud** (at the same time daily - driving, brushing teeth, before bed).
3. **Pray it** (turn the verse into a one sentence prayer for yourself or someone you love).

## Additional Resources

In case you missed it last week, here are some additional resources to check out:

- [The Jesus Storybook Bible](#): this book ties each Bible story directly to Jesus!
- [VeggieTales](#) is a resource with meaningful videos (and songs) that relate to particular Bible stories ([Jonah and the Whale](#), and [Daniel and the Lion's Den](#)) and behaviors/habits ([Madame Blueberry](#), [Larry Boy and the Rumor Weed](#)). These are just examples but many other resources exist.
- Parenting books by [Meredith Miller](#) (more on [Instagram](#)).
- Books on Christian parenting by Dr. William Sears and Martha Sears.