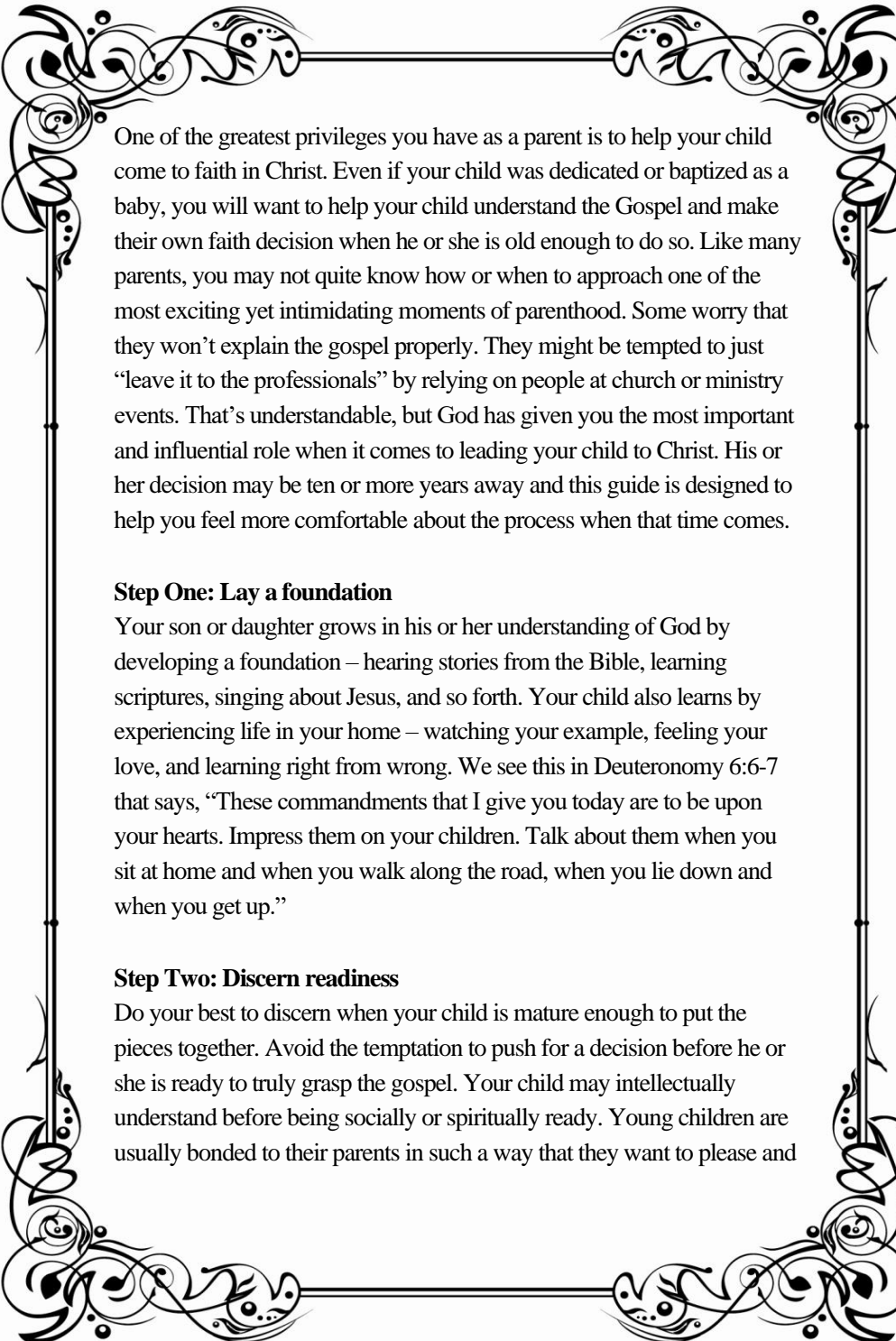




FAITH PATH

The Gospel



One of the greatest privileges you have as a parent is to help your child come to faith in Christ. Even if your child was dedicated or baptized as a baby, you will want to help your child understand the Gospel and make their own faith decision when he or she is old enough to do so. Like many parents, you may not quite know how or when to approach one of the most exciting yet intimidating moments of parenthood. Some worry that they won't explain the gospel properly. They might be tempted to just "leave it to the professionals" by relying on people at church or ministry events. That's understandable, but God has given you the most important and influential role when it comes to leading your child to Christ. His or her decision may be ten or more years away and this guide is designed to help you feel more comfortable about the process when that time comes.

Step One: Lay a foundation

Your son or daughter grows in his or her understanding of God by developing a foundation – hearing stories from the Bible, learning scriptures, singing about Jesus, and so forth. Your child also learns by experiencing life in your home – watching your example, feeling your love, and learning right from wrong. We see this in Deuteronomy 6:6-7 that says, "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."

Step Two: Discern readiness

Do your best to discern when your child is mature enough to put the pieces together. Avoid the temptation to push for a decision before he or she is ready to truly grasp the gospel. Your child may intellectually understand before being socially or spiritually ready. Young children are usually bonded to their parents in such a way that they want to please and

do not have a full sense of a separate self. A child needs to understand that this is a personal decision and not just an opportunity to repeat rote answers.

Step Three: Ask questions

If you feel your child might be ready, ask a few questions to help gauge his or her level of understanding. For example, read Romans 6:23: “For the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord.” Then ask questions like, “What is sin?” “How does your sin affect your relationship to God?” How they respond can help you sense when your child is ready to understand two important concepts:

- **JESUS AS SAVIOR:** The need for forgiveness and cleansing from sin which was made possible through Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross
- **JESUS AS LORD:** The need to submit to God as “the boss” by making Jesus Christ the Lord of one’s life

Step Four: Guide your child towards baptism

Romans 6 says, “...all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his..” If you sense your child has a basic understanding of what sin is as well as what it means to accept God’s gift of salvation and His Lordship, then you can guide him or her towards their decision to follow Jesus into death and rebirth in baptism.

If after reading through this guide and the included *God Loves You and Wants You in His Family!* brochure you would like additional assistance, contact the church to request an appointment for you and your child to meet with a minister or staff member.

Intentional Faith Path Plan

Child’s Name: _____

How will you be intentional this next year?

- Pray daily for my child.
- Consistently spend time in God’s Word.
- Bless my child daily.
- Schedule and have regular family times.
- Prepare to talk with my child about his or her faith decision and baptism.
- _____

The next step on the Faith Path is *Prayer*, recommended at age six. We will offer a *Prayer* kit to guide you.

Recommended Resources

***Rightnow Media* - rightnowmedia.com**

Introducing Your Child to Christ - <https://columbuscoc.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Intro-Child-to-Christ-Design-2.0.pdf>

Romans chapters 4-6 (read this regularly to develop and understanding of Faith, Grace, and Baptism in the life of a Christian)

Church office (662) 328-6084 – contact any of our ministers or elders to help you gain confidence in presenting the gospel to your children or anyone God has given you the opportunity to share his truth with.