

Foursquare Department of Christian Education

DIRECTIONS

A Newsletter for Christian Educators

Summer 1995

MARKING A GENERATION FOR GOD

"Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done . . . THAT THEY MAY SET THEIR HOPE IN GOD." Psalm 78:4b, 7

From Adam's day until now the heart of the Father is that of preparing a generation that is known to praise Him, love Him, obey Him and make Him known. Yet man has labeled those born between 1985 and 2004 as "Generation X" - a generation that is faced with an overwhelming sense of futility as they witness the daily deterioration of their world. But God has no Generation X. His purpose for all generations remains the same: THAT THEY MAY SET THEIR HOPE IN GOD. When God leaves His mark on us, we are no longer victims - only victors in Christ!

A quick scan of this century-ending decade reveals a fascination with both evaluation (Where have we been?) and anticipation (Where are we going?). These two preludes to significant change are perhaps the two most common inquiries of this generation.

Foursquare Christian Education is increasingly called to face our status as a movement and challenged to prepare for a return to that which made us strong. A quick and accurate response promises "a remarkable horizon of unbounded opportunity." Failing to address this challenge now might well condemn us to decades of irrelevancy and erosion.

WHERE DO WE START? - The first wave of this generation will be moving through the middler classes this summer. Drawing their initiative and idealism into the purposes of Christ may eliminate scrambling later.



HOW DO WE DO IT? Providing the initial steps that are both essential and achievable. First, we must restore a belonging and relationship to our Christian education efforts. Mike Keller writes:

"My folks were divorced. The Sunday School teacher who made a difference in my life was a hockey player who spent time with me outside of the class. God knew I needed a special man in my life and He provided him."

In their crucial years, this group will define itself by those who give acceptance and relationship. This is accomplished most effectively by spending time together regularly. (As you know, the least effective scenario is a high percentage of teacher/worker turnover where the child is having to become acquainted with someone new on a bi-weekly basis.)

Second, we must establish and define the value of Christian education ministries. This generation, as well as its predecessors, will commit, but only to VALUE. The value is a marked, changed life helping to change another through the truth of Jesus Christ. Make every effort to harvest high levels of involvement and dedication. Leonardo Salvador (Manila, Philippines) has this to share:

"I started a Sunday School to declare the love of Jesus for the children of workers in a lumber yard. The officials kept threatening my life if I didn't quit. I kept teaching. Now, ten years later, those children have grown to be leaders in the church that grew out of that Sunday School."

Our prayer is for the pastor. A previous edition of the Foursquare Handbook of Operations calls the pastor's role as "the Captain of the Sunday School." A captain sets the sail of the ship . . . he can also dock it. The churches where the pastor is setting the sail to reach and teach through Sunday School/Christian Education are the churches who are experiencing results.

Lastly, we must restore the parent's role as primary discipler. Many parents today have abdicated their God-given role in favor of the "expertise" of the church staff. Yet the Scriptures, not to mention common sense, provides incontestable evidence that even our best efforts will never supersede both the opportunity and responsibility inherent in parenting. As we make better parents, we will make better children and, ultimately, a better church.

Let us position ourselves to reach them now. Let us build our future around the present and not lose yet another generation of Americans to causes other than that of Christ. Leave your mark!

Rick Wulfestieg



Ways to Celebrate God's Creation

Aren't you thrilled to simply be outside? Why not take advantage of the season and have some outside family devotions right in the middle of God's wonderful world. Clip and save the following ideas and randomly choose from them over the next couple of months!

Psalm 33:6-8 - On a clear starry night have your evening prayers outside. Pray that your conscience would be as clear as the starry night sky!

Psalm 84:11, 12 - On a sun shiny day exercise together and talk about how God is your sun and shield. Don't forget the sunscreen!

Psalm 74:16, 17 - Talk about how God created boundaries in His Creation as you walk by a stream or stroll on a beach. Pray for wisdom in creating boundaries for your family.

Psalm 90 - Rejoice together as a family because God is eternal, above and beyond all that He made. Make a list of things to rejoice with and for from Psalm 90.

Psalm 85:10-13 - As a family plant a small garden, window box, or planter. Talk about how God gives a harvest of goodness. Discuss ways you can grow spiritually as a family this spring and summer as you watch your plants grow.

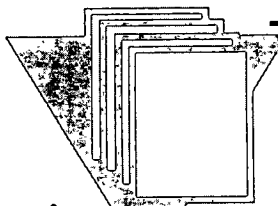
Psalm 92:12-15 - Pray to stay "fresh and green." Take a family walk and look at all the different shades of green in God's creations and how the colors in nature harmonize and don't clash. Talk about how you can harmonize your family constellation.

Psalm 92:1-5 - Proclaim His love in the morning and His faithfulness at night. Get up early and watch the sunrise together as a family and then later in the day, together watch the sun set and offer your prayers to God.

Psalm 95:1-7 - Jump for joy on the Rock of our salvation! Take a nature hike and study the rocks. For the more adventuresome, go rock climbing or find a safe rock and jump off!

Psalm 98:7-9 - Clap with the rivers, sing with the mountains! Go wading in a stream together. Sing your favorite chorus on your favorite mountain trail. If you live in the "flat lands," rent a video of the Alps and sing along as a family as you watch it. Talk about how the mountains show God's majesty.

Psalm 19:1, 2 - Pray that you and your family will hear what creation says about our Creator as you take a nature hike together.



Things You Should Know When Choosing Sunday School Curriculum

Excerpted from *Lessons You Can Love Teaching*, by Mary Ann Jeffreys, March/April 1995 issue of *Your Church*

Spurred on by evolving secular models of education and by increased competition for churches' business, Sunday school curriculum publishers today are using terms like "activity-based," "interactive," and "learning-oriented" - in addition to more traditional parlance like "Christ-centered," "charismatic," "biblically sound," and "life application."

How can you know what curricula will work best in your church?

KNOW YOUR TEACHERS

Before ordering your curriculum, take stock of your situation by asking:

□ **How committed and motivated are our teachers?**

Is it like pulling teeth to get teachers to take even one quarter? Do they decorate their Sunday school rooms and plan outside activities with their classes?

□ **What are your teachers' skills?** Do they lecture and expect absolute cooperation from their kids, or are they able to handle different types of learners? Do they adapt the curriculum to fit the needs of their classes, or do they rigidly adhere to the lesson?

Tip: Try some nonthreatening classroom observation to evaluate their teaching approaches.

□ **What do your teachers expect?**

Ask them questions such as:

- How is the curriculum helping you achieve your goals for the class?
- What elements of the teacher's guide help you most?
- Where would you like more help from the curriculum?

Be prepared for a variety of answers, even conflicting ones. The responses, however, will give you a good idea of your teachers' abilities, styles, and commitments. They may show that some of the teachers welcome curricula full of suggestions and instructions while others need more freedom in a lesson plan.

KNOW YOUR SITUATION

Some factors in a church are more or less fixed. These include:

□ **Age groupings.** How many children do you have in each age bracket? How do you want to group the ages? Do you want all levels studying the same theme at the same time?

□ **Space.** Do you have plenty of room for activities and motion, or are your classrooms so small that even walking around can be a problem? Do the classrooms have tables for crafts?

□ **Cost.** What is your budget? Rule of thumb: Quarterly costs often range between \$1.50 and \$5 per student package, and between \$1.50 and \$15 for a leader's guide. Is the curriculum dated or can it be used again?

KNOW WHAT'S OFFERED

Curriculum publishers are eager to assist churches in their selection process (hoping, of course, to be a major candidate). You can call Foursquare Publications and request samples. Also request their curriculum evaluations, which are tools to help you evaluate how particular curricula might work for your classes. This allows you to evaluate those features against your own goals and needs.

Important questions to ask in evaluating a curriculum are:

□ **What does it teach?** What position does the material take in regard to the Bible? Are students challenged? Is the lesson teacher-driven or does it require student involvement? Are students taught the plan of salvation? Are biblical principles applied to realistic and current life problems?

□ **How does it teach?** Does it reflect an awareness of developmental aspects of childhood? (For example, 2-year-olds are me-centered while 8- to 10-year-olds are more aware of others' feelings.) How does it help children move beyond facts and memorized verses to their life situa-

tion? Do children work in small groups or individually? Does it provide a variety of learning approaches? (For example, some children learn best by hearing, others by seeing or touching, and others by action.)

□ **How does it help the teacher?** Are teaching aids clearly labeled and their application explained? Does the leader's guide offer plenty of ideas to allow for different teaching styles? Are optional resources offered to further prepare the teacher, such as background reading and suggestions for additional study? Does the lesson plan provide an outline or a complete lecture for the teacher to deliver? Are discussion starters and review questions offered? Are suggestions offered for room set-up? Are ideas given for student-interactive decorating, perhaps bulletin boards that illustrate the quarter's lessons?

□ **Are the materials easy-to-use and attractive?** Are materials reproducible? Is the student book multi-ethnic and culturally relevant? Do photos and artwork draw children into the lesson? Are student projects captivating and fun? Do activities involve several senses? Are crafts age-appropriate?

□ **What is the scope and sequence of lessons?** (If you switch curricula after one year, you may find the other company's sequence differs from the one you dropped, in which case you may be teaching the same Bible stories again.)

Once you have ordered a curriculum, keep in touch with your teachers during this time, and apply your criteria closely. Also offer training to assist your teachers in their ministry.

Mary Ann Jeffreys, a Sunday school teacher in Wheaton, Illinois, is editorial coordinator for LEADERSHIP and CHRISTIAN HISTORY magazines.

A father's mission:

Inspire your child to GREATness!

You can't hold an infant for long without pondering that tiny person's life-time potential. Desiring that your children turn out GREAT (*believe in their potential*) and do GREAT things (*act on that potential over a lifetime*) is not only your fathering privilege, it is your mission as well. You can't make your children great, but you can help them become great on their own--doing inspired things...living inspired lives.

Other men--relatives, teachers, bosses, coaches and surrogate dads--can, and often do, perform the work of a father in your child's life, especially if you are absent or inattentive. But when you are involved, the results are even better. Research documents that the child who enjoys a positive and continuous relationship with his or her father tends to have a:

- good self-concept,
- higher self-esteem,
- higher confidence in personal and social interaction,
- higher moral maturity,
- reduced rates of unwed teen pregnancy,
- greater internal control **and**
- higher career aspirations.

Here's how it works: The baseline of greatness is a proper system of **beliefs, values and ethics**. These dictate every decision and choice in life. Dad, when you both teach and model your beliefs honestly and well, children naturally adopt yours (or will return to them after experimenting with others). But too large a gap between your "walk" and your "talk" can push children to try other values and ethics. You've seen it happen.



The critical progression:
Beliefs determine Values
Values determine Judgements
Judgements determine Choices
Choices determine Decisions
Decisions determine Character

Character determines Greatness or Failure

Now, on the foundation of solid beliefs, values and ethics, a superstructure of hard work, skills and discipline must be built.

Attitude: What do your children hear you say most often about work? Do you speak most about loving the challenges or lamenting the difficulties? Do they watch you push to reach your personal best or give only the minimum required? If asked, would they say that you put personal disciplines ahead of personal pleasures? Attitudes are not just important to hard work and discipline; they are essential.

Time: The dad that doesn't show up for "work" often enough won't get the job done.

Communication: Is your vocabulary laced with honestly spoken phrases like: "Way to go!" "I like the way you... Never give up..." "Will you forgive me?" Most fathers don't recognize the enormous power in the words they speak to their children.

Competition: This is the driving force behind greatness, when it's rooted in fair play, honest values and hard work. Be sure to help your child accurately assess his/her strengths and limitations. The most intense competition should be against his or her own personal best. Public greatness starts right there.

This article excerpted from Smart Dads newsletter No. 105, Paul Lewis, College of Fathering at Family University. P. O. Box 270616, San Diego, CA 92109-2616 (619)487-7099

A short testimony

about the importance of doctrinal & biblical teaching. This was shared at the **Danville, CA Christian Education Conference**.

"As a little guy around eight years old during the 1950's, our Sunday school teacher taught from Matthew 5:9 which says 'Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.' Much later in 1966 and 1967 I found myself a machine gunner in Vietnam. I truly believe we were there to bring 'peace'. Thus, when many of my friends died in Vietnam and my sanity was being attacked, I was preserved by this one single verse that God brought back to memory."

Marking Your Children for God

by Ann Gutierrez

Have you ever felt helpless to keep your kids Christian? Have you ever said something like this: "I know there is no guarantee when it comes to raising children. They all have to rebel. I just hope mine will come back to the Lord someday. After all, the Bible says, 'Train up a child in a way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.'"

With all the evil that is bombarding our children we need to do more than grab on to averse about future tense faith! God is unveiling a powerful plan right now for our children... And we as Christian parents need not sit idly by, adopting the hands-off attitude of the world, and allow them to be snatched away!

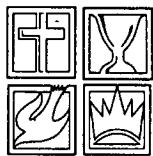
Marking Your Children for God motivates and equips parents to raise up their teens as solid Christians. Pp/bk \$7.00

Available through Foursquare Publications 1(800)992-7444

Your church is a place of discovery for people. All ages come to see, feel and understand the works of a loving God and the care of a redeemed people. Listed are seven thoughts of how your church can be a place that helps mark a generation for God.

As a church are you providing...

- A place of **Sanctuary** (Psalm 73:17)
- A place of **Value** (Psalm 77:13)
- A place of **Planting** (Psalm 1:3)
- A place of **Exemplifying** (I Thessalonians 1:5-8)
- A place of **Prayer** (Matthew 21:13)
- A place of **Equipping** (Ephesians 4:11-13)
- A place of **Destiny** (Jeremiah 29:11)



FOURSQUARE CLIPART

ON COMPUTER DISK!!

3 1/2" ibm/pcx format. Foursquare symbols, Good News Bears, youth and missions logos. **40 images for \$19.95**

Contact Foursquare Publications
1(800)992-7444



"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever."
Hebrews 13:8



New Appointments

Tom Ferguson has appointed **Lynn Sawyer** as the new Northwest District Christian Education Representative! Lynn is a graduate of L.I.F.E. Bible College and has served at Faith Center in Eugene, Oregon. Lynn can be reached at: **(206) 851-6968.**

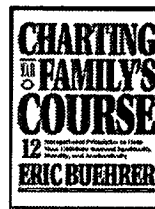
Brenda Osborn is serving as both the Southeast District Christian Education Representative and the Student Ministry Director for the college. She can be reached at: **(703) 328-1263**

Great new books about marking a generation for God:

Discover Your Children's Gifts: A Parent's Handbook to Recognize and Develop Your Children's God-Given Gifts

by Don and Kate Fortune

A handbook that guides parents in identifying and developing their children's personality gifts. Workbook format. **\$11.99**

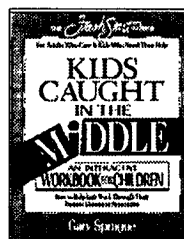
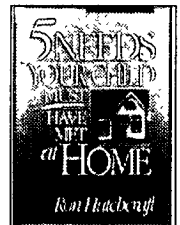


Charting Your Family's Course
by Eric Buchrer **\$8.99**

Let's face it, many of us live life by accident most of the time. The furthest we plan is for this year's vacation. We just hope that our children reach their "potential." But we're not sure what that is and we are keenly aware that we certainly haven't reached ours.

5 Needs Your Child Must Have Met at Home
by Ron Hutchcraft **\$10.99**

The author can show you how to make the most of the days you have left with your children. The book details the five critical needs of every child: *the need for a secure self, honest sexual answers, satisfying love, stable authority, and spiritual reality.* You will learn how to identify and affirm your children's strengths, how to look beyond your children's deeds to meet their needs, and how to raise children of integrity.



Kids Caught in the Middle - An Interactive Workbook for Children by Gary Sprague reaches children where they hurt. Activities, illustrations, and the shared experiences of others help youngsters identify and work through the confusion and hurt that follow in the

wake of divorce or separation. Designed so a parent or other adult can participate. The workbook allows communication on tough subjects, and provides much-needed encouragement. "Our hope is that this workbook will be a tool to help kids break the cycle of divorce and dysfunction," says the author. **\$10.99**

Order from Foursquare Publications
1(800)992-7444

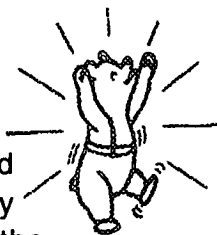
Here's some Beary Good News...

Le Claire, Iowa

In September, 1993 Le Claire had four children in Sunday school. My wife, Mary, had a desire to see the **Good News Bears Club** started; and on a shoe-string budget the program began.

The people of the church caught the vision and became involved either in prayer, working, or with financial support. Anything from hayrides, a 10-foot banana split, to marching in a local parade, were used to cause interest in the "BEARS."

A bear costume was made by one of the members and is worn at all special functions. Results have been miraculous. The Sunday school has grown by seven new families; we have had 14 conversions, and seven water baptisms as a result of the Bears program. An average "BEAR" meeting now has at least 25 in attendance. I would encourage other churches to start a Good news Bears program. -- Mike Gibbons, Senior Pastor



What is the Value of a Single Adult Ministry in Today's Church?

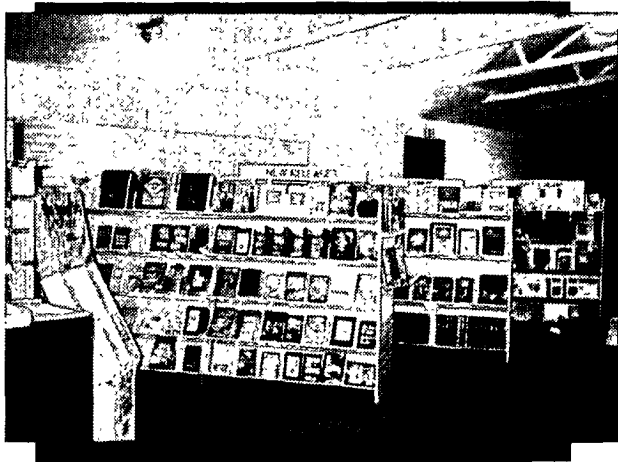


No church will grow without a singles ministry. The church that grows will have to continue to find ways to reach both youth and single adults. But single adults may be the more crucial ministry as they continue to increase in our society.

The **affirmation** of singles begins with the pastor from the pulpit. When a pastor continually uses too much family language or talks about couples, the message that single people will take from this is that they are not included nor are they welcome. Be sensitive to language and use words like "community," or "gathering."

It is also an **encouragement** to include single people in leadership. Having served in churches of every size from 7 members to the singles minister of a church over 7,000, I can honestly say that in every church situation, I have found single people to be among the best and most productive leadership of the church. (They can also be the quickest to burn themselves out if their desire to serve is not moderated, and if they don't govern their time wisely.) - Tom Tyndall, Senior Minister, First Presbyterian Church, Lakeland, Florida

**The Foursquare Resource and
Distribution Center
is now opened to the public!**



This complete bookstore and service center is located one mile from L.I.F.E. Bible College East in Christiansburg, Virginia. Summer Sunday School curriculum, VBS and church resources are available.

**Foursquare Resource Center
1511 Flanagan Drive
Christiansburg, VA 24073
1(800) 992-7444**

When one thinks of the command Jesus gave to Peter to feed my sheep, (John 21:15-17), the value of a ministry with single adults becomes part of the **church's obedience to our Lord**. The value to a church to have such a ministry is the effectiveness it brings to caring for a group of people that are increasingly growing in numbers and often have specialized needs.

Single adults now total 44% of the general population in America. **Singles need to know they are part of the family of faith**. Most singles are crying for a sense of community.

One of the potential dangers that single adults face is a growing preoccupation with meeting one's own needs and losing a broader, less self-absorbed perspective. The church offers singles an extended family in which to experience the love of God in Jesus Christ. By its total life, the church can expand the vision of singles for responsible Christian living and sensitivity to others. - Dr. B. Clayton Bell, Senior Minister, Highland Park Presbyterian Church, Dallas, TX

DIRECTIONS FOR FOURSQUARE CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS is a resource published quarterly by the National Department of Christian Education, 1910 W. Sunset Blvd., #200, Los Angeles, CA 90026. If you have any news or events to share please contact us.