



**AGE 3**

*The Root Years*



**H**  **ME**  
*22.6*

# AGE 3

## *A Snapshot of Life*

### **From age 3-4 years, children**

- Recognize the Bible as a special book and enjoy handling and using the Bible.
- Enjoy singing songs about Jesus.
- Understand that Jesus is their special friend.
- Begin to develop a conscience and are sensitive to feelings.
- Begin to show some self-control but can resort to temper tantrums when extremely angry.
- Respond to verbal guidance and enjoy encouragement.
- Are learning to share and take turns.

### *Parenting Tip*

Teach about sharing, helping, and taking turns during mealtime and playtime. Talk about the importance of obeying. Use moments of discipline to teach obedience to God's Word. Pray with your child using simple language and short prayers, and ask God to help him or her obey.

# Parent Dedication

## What is Parent Dedication?

Parent dedication is giving a strong spiritual legacy to your children. The Legacy Principle, the Likelihood Principle, and the Lenses Principle are crucial to your child's spiritual growth. In the parent dedication section you'll find tools to help you grow as a parent. **The Legacy Principle** states that the scriptures tell us that what we do today directly influences the multi-generational cycle of family traits, beliefs and actions – for good or bad (Exodus 20:5-6, Psalm 78:5-8). So passing a strong faith to our children begins by having a strong faith ourselves, modeling the gospel in our marriages and in how we relate to those closest to us. Some of us need to break negative cycles that may have started with our own upbringing in order to launch a new and improved legacy for the next generation. **The Likelihood Principle** states that the good news is this: in the context of healthy relationships, children tend to embrace the values of their parents. Proverbs 22:6 tells us that when children learn right from wrong at home under the nurturing, loving training of parents, they tend to adopt mom and dad's beliefs. While there are no guarantees because every child has a free will, kids are far more likely to embrace their parent's faith if they enjoy their parent's company! That's a big part of the reason parents are warned not to "provoke your children to wrath" but rather "bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). Bottom line – a strong relationship with mom and dad is key to a strong Christian faith. **The Lenses Principle** says Jesus taught that our enemy's primary weapon is deception – getting us to believe and live according to lies rather than truth (John 8:44). And when someone is deceived, he or she does not know it! Our children are growing up in a culture that bombards them with lies. An hour or two per week at church is no match for the hundreds of hours spent with media, school, and friends. Nor can it compete with a child's fallen nature that often wants to rebel against what is good, true and beautiful. It is the job of parents to equip children with the corrective "lenses" of truth so they can better navigate the deceptive roads of life.



**“But Jesus said, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven,” says Matthew 19:14. Jesus loves the little children, and He has given you the privilege of being a parent. Value the gift of your child by being the godly parents Jesus desires you to be. Pray for discernment as you continue raising godly children.**



# Parenting Tool: *Respect*

Instilling respect is one of the most important tasks you have as a parent. Respect is essential to creating a happy home and needs to be taught at an early age. Real love cannot exist apart from respect. Children who are “loved” but not taught the importance of respect for others are really not loved at all. They are simply spoiled. The verb respect means “to listen to, to heed, to hold in high regard, to esteem.” Respect is the basis for Jesus’ command, “And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise” (Luke 6:31). Remember, “little eyes” are watching you. Are you following God’s command? You are their role model!

How can you raise respectful children?

**Teach through your words and actions.** Model what it looks like to be respectful of others. Ask God to help you in all areas of your life and to guide your words and actions. Use good manners when responding to your kids and to others. Meditate on Psalm 25:5, which says, “Lead me in Your truth and teach me...”

**Praise your child.** Truthful praise has a tremendous impact on your child. You can express praise to your child not only verbally, but also physically, through smiles and hugs. Positive messages reinforce a child’s goodness and encourage him or her to have good behavior. Communicate over and over again to your children that you love them! As 1 John 4:7 reminds us, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God...”

**Teach obedience.** One of the most important responsibilities for a parent who wishes to create a respectful child is to teach the child obedience. How a parent responds when a child is being defiant determines the relationship between the parent and child. If the parent leads with firm and loving discipline, the result will be a secure and respectful child. When properly applied, loving discipline works. It stimulates tender affection, made possible by mutual respect between a parent and a child. It allows God to be introduced to children. It encourages a child to respect other people. Ephesians 6:1-3 says, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother,’ which is the first commandment with promise: ‘that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.’”

**Teach your child to serve others.** When you teach your children to respect, you teach them to value themselves and others—and that will make them blessings to the world. This enables them to have a servant’s heart as Galatians 5:13 instructs, “...through love serve one another.”

**Teach polite responses.** Your child can show respect by using good manners. By learning to say “please” and “thank you” at an early age, manners will become a normal routine. Make sure you model this in responding to your child. Reflect on Psalm 119:103 as you consider polite responses to model for your children: “How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth.”

When your children respect you, they can more easily respect God, others, and themselves. If you are not modeling kindness and respect, you cannot teach it. Exemplify God in all you do! “The righteous man walks in his integrity; his children are blessed after him,” says Proverbs 20:7.



**As parents we are trusting the Holy Spirit to use our efforts during the Root Years to develop the characteristics of a disciple in the Branch Years.**

# *Blessing Your Children*

## How do I bless my children?

There is power in a blessing. The Hebrew word for blessing is used over 640 times in the Old Testament alone. Do you know the very first thing God did after creating us? In Genesis 1:27–28 we read, “So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them...” We were made for blessing! Based on examples in the Bible, there are five basic elements that make up a biblical blessing:

**1. Meaningful Touch** Meaningful touch has many beneficial effects. The act of touch is a key to communicating warmth, personal acceptance, and affirmation—even physical health! For anyone who wishes to see the blessing grow and develop in a child, touch is an integral part of the blessing. As Mark 10:13–16 says, “Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, ‘Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.’ And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them.”

**2. A Spoken Message** Words have an incredible power to build us up or tear us down emotionally. This is particularly true when those words are coming from our parents. Therefore, the blessing hinges on a spoken message. Your child desperately needs to hear a spoken blessing from you. As parents, we must be keenly aware of the power of the spoken word and also be aware of how powerful the absence of spoken words can be. Both people and relationships suffer in the absence of words of blessing, or those spoken words of love, encouragement, and support. Proverbs 16:24

reminds us, “Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the bones...”

**3. Expression of High Value** To “value” something means to attach great importance to it. This is at the very heart of the concept of blessing. Anytime we bless someone, we are attaching high value to him or her. Our children need to hear that they are someone who has great worth apart from his or her performance. As Ephesians 4:29 reminds us, “Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.”

**4. Picture of a Special Future** Communicating a special future to a child is another important part of giving the blessing. Children are filled with the potential to be all God intends them to be. Picturing a special future for your children can help bring out the best in their lives. It gives them a positive direction to strive toward and surrounds them with hope. When a child feels in his or her heart that the future is hopeful and something to look forward to, it can greatly affect his or her attitude toward life. We can see this very thing in our relationship with the Lord. Jeremiah 29:11 says, “‘For I know the thoughts that I think toward you,’ says the Lord, ‘thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.’”

**5. An Active Commitment** The first four elements listed above are the building blocks of the blessing, but the mortar that holds them together is an active commitment—the fifth element. This element of the blessing describes the responsibility that goes with the blessing. Parents need to rely on the Lord to give them the strength and staying power to confirm their children’s blessing. You have God’s Word through the Scriptures as a guide, plus the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Words alone cannot communicate the blessing; they need to be backed with a commitment to do everything possible to help the one blessed to be successful. Isaiah 40:31 encourages us, “But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”

For more information on the biblical blessing, see *The Gift of the Blessing* by Gary Smalley and John Trent, PhD.

# *Blessing Your Child 3-4 Years*

**“For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth,” says Deuteronomy 7:6. Blessing your child through meaningful touch and spoken or written words will help them see how valuable they are to you and to the Lord and how they are growing and changing in positive ways.**



## **Ways to Bless Your Child**

### **Meaningful Touch**

Do you ever pat your child’s back when he or she goes to bed at night? Just a simple patting on the back for a few minutes shows the love and affection you have for them. Keep embracing your child with the love of God. “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments,” says 1 John 5:2.

### **Daily blessings of Scripture**

- Proverbs 18:21 says, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue...” As a parent, you have the power to speak life or death to your child. When you choose to speak the Word of God over your child, you are choosing to speak life.
- Jesus said in John 6:63, “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.”
- Matthew 5:16, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”
- 3 John 1:4, “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”
- Jeremiah 29:11, “‘For I know the thoughts that I think toward you,’ says the Lord, ‘thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.’”
- Psalm 56:3, “Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You.”

### **Written or spoken blessings**

Writing our blessings has the capacity to bring warmth, light, and love to your children again and again throughout their lives. Your words can be simple or poetic. The blessing needs to express to your children that they are of high value to you. Once you have written out a blessing, pick a special time to share it with your child. Share it with him or her at bedtime, or take

him or her to the park. There is no wrong way to share blessings. God will reveal to you creative ways to share. As Hebrews 13:16 reminds us, "But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

Write a "birthday blessing" to put in your child's "blessing box."

### One-on-One time

Some ideas for one-on-one time include

- Going to a store and looking at toys
- Making a "kindness jar" (fill with ideas of how to be kind to others)
- Making a tent
- Going outside and looking for bugs

### A blessing for you

"If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and the dominion forever and ever," (1 Peter 4:11).

### *What's a Blessing Box?*

In Genesis 1:27-28 God's Word says, "So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them..."

We were all made for blessing! Written words can place unconditional love and acceptance into the heart of a child. One idea for sharing blessings with your children is to have a "blessing box," or a special box where you can store written blessings and encouraging words for your child as they develop.

Several ideas for written blessings include Scripture passages you claim for your child, words of affirmation, descriptions of accomplishments, desires for the future, prayers, or whatever God puts on your heart. Continue to store these blessings in the special box throughout your child's life. Think of what a treasure it will be in your child's adult life to have this blessing box!

# *Family Time*

## What is Family Time?

The idea of family worship is both attractive and intimidating. The thought of beginning a new pattern of worship in the home can be overwhelming for those just beginning. This guide includes answers to basic questions that we hope will equip you to lead your family in worship.

### **What does the Bible say about growing together in Christ as a family?**

The importance of the family in discipleship is prominent throughout the Scriptures (Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Psalm 78:5-7; Ephesians 6:4; 2 Timothy 1:5, 3:15). Husbands are primarily responsible for the spiritual leadership of their wives (Ephesians 5:22-33). Parents, especially fathers, are primarily responsible for the spiritual growth of their children (Ephesians 6:1-3). These are huge responsibilities, but God has promised to provide everything we need to lead our families well, according to His design. As leaders in our home, the critical thing to remember is that God's Word must be written upon our hearts. Our faith in Christ and reliance on His Word should be authentic, tangible, and transparent.

### **What are the benefits of family worship?**

- Family worship brings glory to God. It is a visible reminder for all in the home that God is worthy of our time, attention, and affection.
- Family worship produces joy in the home. Jesus will bring joy to families who worship and grow together. The love of Christ will be more evident in a family where worship is central.
- Family worship effects change in the world. As families read, pray, study, sing, and grow together, they join from their homes in what God is doing across the nations, while influencing each other's lives for generations to come.

## What should we do during family worship?

Keep it simple. Consider the following elements as you worship together:

**READ**—Read a portion of the Bible together. Don't worry if you've already read it in your time alone with God. Reading a chapter a second time will only reinforce what God is teaching you. If children are present and able to read, allow them to do so. Of course, you'll want to explain difficult words and concepts (but don't worry too much if you can't explain everything!).

**DISCUSS**—After reading the Bible together, work through a simple process of examining what has been read, much like you do in your own time alone with God. Give everyone a chance to discuss the passage and consider how it applies to everyday life. Ideally, you will lead by example and share with your family what you learned in your time alone with God and the difference it has made.

**PRAY**—Consider praying through the key points of the Bible passage that you have just read and discussed. Ask God to change your hearts, minds, lives, and family accordingly. This specific prayer can lead to a more general time of prayer that uses the letters P-R-A-Y as a guide:

Praise—Worship God for who He is.

Repent—Confess your sin to God and acknowledge your need for Jesus.

Ask—Intercede for particular needs in your life and other's lives.

Yield—Surrender your life to following Jesus wherever He leads you.

Try to include everyone as you pray, even if this is on a rotating basis. Additionally, you may want to keep a prayer journal that enables you to keep track of prayer requests and God's answers to those requests.

**SING**—Sing or listen to music together as a family. If someone in the family has musical gifts, that person may lead some simple songs. If no one in your family is musical, you can sing along with music from a CD or DVD and discuss what the songs mean.

**MEMORIZE**—Choose key verses or passages to memorize. You may want to work on a verse or passage for a week or a month. Either way, be sure to work together, taking time to understand what you are memorizing. Periodically, set aside time to review verses over the course of the year.

# Frequently Asked Questions About Family Worship

## 1. What if a father or mother is not a Christian?

The commands regarding family discipleship in the Bible assume believing parents. Of course, this is not always the case. In those instances where the father is not a follower of Christ, the mother will need to take the initiative for leading family worship in a non-offensive and non-threatening way. In the case of a mother not being a follower of Christ, the father should lead with compassion and sensitivity.

## 2. What about a single parent family?

In this case, the responsibility falls to the single parent. This, along with the many other duties that single parents have, may present a significant challenge. However, God will supply great grace and everything we need to raise and strengthen our children in the faith.

## 3. What about children?

The dynamic of family worship will vary considerably depending upon the ages of the children involved. The goal for every child in the family is not the same. With young children, focus on the importance of knowing God, respecting the Bible, and worshiping as a family. With older children, dig into Scripture more, ask good questions, and discuss how the Bible relates to life and how a relationship with Christ changes us every day.

## 4. How do I keep things interesting if the ages of my children vary widely?

Regardless of age, include children in planning, reading, singing, teaching, and praying as much as possible and as much as maturity will allow. Make sure to keep things simple, and don't be afraid to keep it short; listen well, and be aware of what is happening in each child's heart and life.

## 5. What time of day is best for family worship?

Timing is far less important than consistency. Some families prefer to worship as the day begins. For others, evening may work best. Many families prefer to adjoin family worship to the evening meal since everyone may be present at that time.



Deuteronomy 6:7 says,  
"You shall teach [God's words] diligently  
to your children, and shall talk of them  
when you sit in your house, and when you  
walk by the way, and when you lie down,  
and when you rise up."

Concentrated time in family worship  
can serve as a catalyst and support for  
"as you go, as you sit, as you walk"  
conversations and applications of God's  
Word within our families. Encouraging  
and challenging our spouses and children  
in Christian faith happens best in the  
context of real, everyday life. Family  
worship builds consistency into our family  
routines and opens up many opportunities  
and possibilities within our family  
relationships.



# A Family Time from The Book of Job

## READ

o Job 1

o Job endured a long period of mourning, sickness and continued suffering. These events are detailed throughout the remainder of the book of Job (until chapter 42).

o Job 42:12-17

o The reason for Job's trials may not be obvious when we read this story. God's ways are often mysterious to us. However, we do know Job's life has been an age-old example of trusting in God during suffering. Suffering, as Job did, seems always to bring up the question 'Why?' Why would God allow bad things to happen? Why is there suffering in the world? And the list could go on. These questions are not bad questions and they have answers, even if those answers are veiled to us in this lifetime. However, if we stop the conversation by only asking 'Why,' then we may miss the very design of suffering in our lives. If we follow Christ and believe our lives are solely for His glory, His word tells us to rejoice in suffering. Indeed, we are called to boast about suffering (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). Why boast in affliction? It seems like a strange response to suffering—rejoicing? However, as followers of Christ, it is important for us to see that suffering and trials are moments of opportunity— opportunity to trust, praise, obey, and to possibly even turn from sin. The question of 'Why?' can't be the only question we ask. It must always lead us to a second question. And that question is 'How?'

- How can I best display Christ to the world through my circumstances?
- How can I use my trials to draw closer to God?
- How can God be most glorified in my difficulties?

We learn important and practical truths from the story of Job:

- God's ways are not fully known to us.
- God is always good.
- We must trust God in good times and in difficult times.
- God's strength is revealed when we are our weakest.

*The Bottom Line: God is sovereign over suffering, even if we are veiled to its*

*purposes in our lives. God is for us and not against us.*

### **Questions:**

- How was God glorified through Job's unwavering commitment to Him?
- Do you think you would respond to suffering as Job did?
- How is God's strength shown more clearly when we are at our weakest?

### **PRAY**

o Petition is praying for your own personal needs. While this is not the sole focus of our prayer lives, it is appropriate to pray for the needs and desires of your heart. We are to pray for our needs in times of sickness, sorrow, trial and joy, so that ultimately we learn to seek God's will in our lives. Through prayers of petition, we come to a deeper understanding of God's sovereignty over all things, whether they happen the way we would like or not. It is about submitting to His will and trusting that He will guard us in Christ Jesus. If you desire to read some passages from scripture about this, some are listed below.

### **Biblical Basis for Petition:**

Philippians 4:6; James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:13-15

Take an opportunity for those gathered with you in worship to mention specific personal prayer needs you may have. Pray for each one of these requests specifically.

- o Pray for the nation of Tibet. Pray for:
  - Translation of scripture (New Testament) into Tibetan
  - Christians serving among Tibetans
  - Chinese Christians to be able to travel freely and minister to Tibetans

### **MEMORIZE**

o Job 1:21 "And he said, 'Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'"

### **SUGGESTIONS**

These suggestions are intended to help parents facilitate God-centered discussions with their children. Parents should prayerfully use these suggestions to help their children discover the truths of God's Word and worship Him together.

## **Preschool (Birth-Kindergarten)**

o Show your child a box of band-aids. You may even allow them to open them and put band-aids all over his/her arms and legs.

o Discuss how sick Job was. Say, "Did God know Job was sick? Yes, God knows everything. Could anyone make Job better? No. God was the only one who could make Job better. Nothing is too hard for God. Who provides for us? God does. Does God provide everything we need? Yes. Can or does God choose to take away our suffering? Sometimes, but God is always with us even when we are sick. He never leaves us."

## **Children (Grades 1-5)**

o What is suffering? Suffering means to have pain, discomfort or sorrow. It means to experience something unpleasant.

o Refer to something that your child(ren) learned that was difficult and may have caused pain such as learning to ride a bike without training wheels, learning to rollerblade, ride a rip stick, ice skate, etc.

o Ask your child(ren) why you allowed them to go through pain. Explain that you allowed them to go through pain because you wanted them to learn something or how to do something you knew would be good for them.

o It is because God loves us that He lets us go through hard times, have problems, and even suffer. Having problems and suffering helps our faith grow strong. Going through troubles helps us learn to trust in God's promises. We should thank God for giving us problems and suffering because He is teaching us something when we deal with those problems and troubles.

o Share a time of suffering from your life with your child(ren) and what God taught you through that suffering or time of trouble.

o See if your child(ren) can list other people in the Bible who also had times of suffering (Daniel, Joseph, Paul, etc.).

## **Students (Grades 6-12)**

o After reading Job 42:12-17 ask, "What's more important—knowing the reason for your suffering or learning how to respond to your suffering?" Discuss.

- o Read aloud Job 1:20-22. How was Job able to respond to suffering in the way he did? How would an attitude like his change your life when it comes to suffering?
- o When, if ever, has suffering led to something good in your life? Discuss.

# *Church Community*

## What is Church Community?

With so many young people leaving the church after they are under the leadership of their parents, it is important that we teach the necessity of the church. Scripture says that the church is the Bride of Christ and He has given the church these four responsibilities: worship God, connect with others, grow in God's Word, and go tell the world about Christ. It is important that our children understand the heart behind what the church is meant to be and that our children allow Christ to transform their hearts to serve Him through His church.

We go to church to worship our God who has saved each of us and given us a personal relationship with Him. We go to church to come together to celebrate our Heavenly Father by giving Him our worship. Our children should see families living their lives side-by-side, sharing experiences, caring for each other, being open with one another, and praying together. Our children should know that the church is a place where they can grow in their faith and gain the knowledge that will help them grow closer to the Lord and live a more abundant life. In other words, our children should know the church is a place where we can be transformed. Finally, the church leads us to the point where we must open our eyes and our hearts to step out and follow the nudging of the Holy Spirit to reach the world around us.

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*Why is it important to bring  
my 3-year-old to church?*

At 3 to 4 years of age, children love being around their friends. Even though it is "all about them" at this age, it is important for them to connect with others and build relationships. Your child will build positive friendships by discovering God's Word with other children of the same age. At church, children learn God's truths and discover it is a fun and happy place to be. They do not question coming to church because it becomes a natural part of their life. Though it is easy to find an excuse not to come to church, by being faithful in attendance, you show your child that it is a priority in life. Proverbs 17:17 says, "A friend loves at all times..." Taking your children to church is a great way to show them you love them.

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# *Discipling As You Go*

## **What is Discipling As You Go?**

Deuteronomy 6 is clear in its instructions to parents: constantly, as you live your life, be an example and train your children to follow the Lord. As parents, it is important for us to live a consistent life of faith in front of our children. As things happen in life, we should use those events to train our children, not only in right and wrong, but also in how to make decisions to live the abundant life that Christ has for us. We should model and explain how God's truth should be the standard of how we live our lives. In other words, even from the beginning, we should teach wisdom rather than the facts of "do's and don'ts." Faith is much easier caught than taught. Parents should always help their children see life's decisions through the lenses of our faith.

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## Parenting Tools: *Mealtime*

Mealtime can be a challenge for all families, especially for those with small children. In today's fast-paced world, it is hard to find a time when a family can actually sit down together at home to eat. Make it a priority as much as possible to make mealtime a time when you can actually share words of encouragement and talk about what was special in your children's day. Make sure you eliminate distractions, such as TV and cell phones. Be a good role model by showing good manners at the dinner table. Eat slowly and remember that this is an opportunity for the family to spend time together. Kids love to talk and share what is on their mind. Mealtime is a time to apply life lessons such as how to be kind to friends, how to forgive those who are mean, and how to pray for people who are sick. Share Bible thoughts such as "Be kind to one another" (Ephesians 4:32) and "A friend loves at all times" (Proverbs 17:17).

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# Parenting Tools: *Fears*

*From "New Parent Power!" by John Rosemond*

Fears are common to three-year olds. Leading the list are fear of the dark, fear of being left alone, and fear of things that go bump in the night. Three-year-olds often misinterpret ordinary events as threatening because of the interaction of three characteristics:

1. The need to protect their recently acquired and still fragile sense of identity. As children grow in self-sufficiency, they must come to grips with the anxiety associated with letting go of their parents. Fears dramatize this process. They are symbolic, fantasy-laden expressions of the young child's feelings of vulnerability.
2. The flowering of imaginative thought. Threes have the ability to conjure up mental images of things real and unreal but lack the ability to control the process.
3. The inability to separate word from thing. If there is a word for something, it must exist. Threes can't separate fact from fiction because both are represented in the same medium-language.

Parents often misinterpret a child's fearfulness as a symptom of insecurity or upcoming emotional problems. They react as if the fear were the child's way of saying, "You guys aren't taking care of me." They feel responsible for this anxiety, so they try to protect the child from it. Unfortunately, the parents communicate their anxieties and actually increase the child's sense of helplessness.

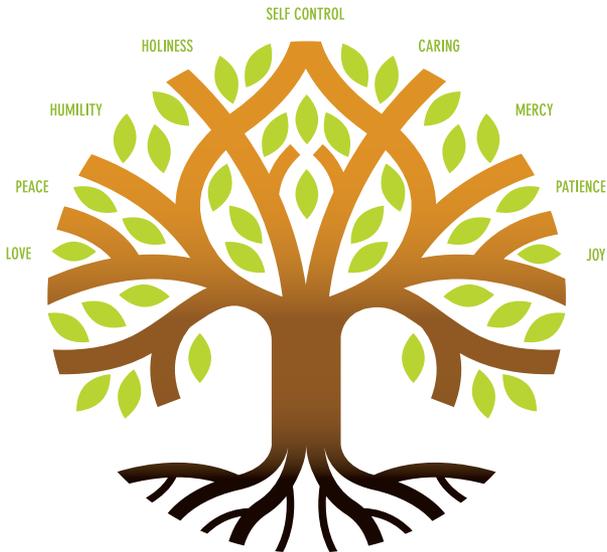
Take this opportunity to teach your child that the Lord is always watching over them, and let them know that He is always there to talk to in prayer. Explain how God loves them and is taking care of them. You can read scriptures like:

- Psalm 91:11-12 "For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone."
- Luke 12:32 "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

The most effective approach is first to acknowledge the fear: "I know the dark can be frightening when you are three years old." Then identify with the child: "When I was three, I was afraid of the dark too."

Finally, provide reassurance: "I'll be downstairs in the living room, and I will take care of you." Stay close enough to make the child feel protected, but not so close that your presence validates the fear.

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**At an early age, teach your child that prayer is always available to them as a source of peace.**

**"Cast your burden on the Lord, And He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved." - Psalm 55:22**

**H**  **ME**  
*22.6*