



## Grandkids, Great-Grandkids and Beyond

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Psalm 78 gives some helpful reminders of the importance of passing godly truth from one generation to the next. Psalm 78:4 says, “We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, His power, and the wonders He has done.”

My wife and I had the amazing opportunity to be in the birthing room during the birth of both of our granddaughters. I remember when our son was born, poor old dad sat for hours all alone in the hospital waiting room. Shortly after 3:17 a.m. I received only a glance through a glass window peeking in the nursery. A couple of years later when our daughter was born, I watched on a monitor in a private father’s waiting room. Today, mothers may invite selected family members to be right in the birthing room with her. So nine years ago and again seven years ago, my wife and I stood next to our daughter and her husband as she gave birth to our granddaughters. What a thrill that was. Our daughter had assigned each of us specific responsibilities. Her husband was to be her encourager and to cut the umbilical cord. I was to discretely videotape the delivery. Grandma was to be her aide and generally help as needed. When the time came for cutting the umbilical cord, Dad was so emotional that Grandma had to do the honors.

There is nothing quite like seeing grandchildren come into this world. As we watch our two granddaughters grow, we see personalities forming. On occasion when they spend the night with Grandma and Grandpa, late at night I slip down the hall and see them sleeping on our living room couch. One evening when their mom and dad were “out on a date,” I looked at their innocent faces and memories of years gone by flooded my mind. Grandparenting is quite the season of life.

As grandparents or great-grandparents, we have the joy of being with the children and then with a grin, we hand them back to Mom and Dad. Many grandparents joke, “We spoil them and give them back.” Being a grandparent or great-grandparent is one of the greatest thrills in life.

Psalm 78 reminder, it is a joy and privilege to “...tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, His power, and the wonders He has done.” If you have grandkids or great grandkids, consider these four questions:

1. What positive actions and attitudes do I display to help nurture my grandchildren and great-grandchildren in spiritual things?
2. How can I share my family history—both joys and sorrows—in a positive way?
3. What will I need to do to mentor my grandchildren and great-grandchildren?
4. What values do my grandchildren and great-grandchildren see in me? How can I strengthen those values in their lives?

Grandparenting takes a team effort. Your life style permits your grandchildren and great-grand children to “see in action” what a biblically sound, godly life is like. If your marriage is God honoring, you can share God’s love with your grandchildren. Try these practical tips for communicating your love:

1. Accept your grandchildren for who they are. Respect each grandchild as a special person. Discover something unique about each grandchild and provide an opportunity to encourage his or her development. Believe in your grandchildren. Never ridicule them, and compliment them often.
2. Take time to be with your grandchildren. Plan a day together to just have fun. Go hiking fishing, camping, or plan a trip to a park. Spend time together having fun. Even if you live far away, plan some special times with and for grandchildren when you do get together.
3. Do activities together. Prepare a meal. Bake a cake or brownies together. Go grocery shopping and let your grandkids choose some foods. Young children love to scramble eggs, plus they get to enjoy a good breakfast after the work is done!
4. Be patient, fair, consistent, firm, and forgiving. Children have an amazing way of moving on without holding grudges. They respect discipline and learn great lessons.
5. Show affection to each grandchild. In addition to a lot of hugs and kisses, be sure you're modeling a loving marriage. As your grandchildren see your love relationship in your marriage, they'll grow to love and respect others. This is the time to really learn to communicate with grandchildren. This is the time to sharpen your computer skills and take advantage of email, text messaging, Facebook, and even Web 2.0.

Read Psalm 78 and then respond to these five questions:

1. What are the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord?
2. What were the reasons behind the Israelites' chronic lack of faith?
3. How did God respond to the failures of the Israelites?
4. What are the wonders God has done in my own life?
5. Why is it that I fail to trust God despite evidence of His goodness and power?

Helpful Resources:

- Berman, Eleanor, *Grandparenting ABC's*, The Berkley Publishing Group, New York, NY, ©1998
- Gutowski, Carolyn, *Grandparents are Forever*, Paulist Press, Mahwah, New Jersey, ©1994
- Rose, Jerry and Shirley, *GPS God's Plan for Significance*, SigLiv Publishing/Total Living Network, Chicago, IL (particularly pages 196ff)