



SOME TIPS FOR HELPING OUR CHILDREN GROW SPIRITUALLY

By Andrew Lake

Connect up with a church

Our young people need hope and many of us are aware that taken as a whole our children's generation is more pessimistic about the future than previous generations. It's not just the present threat of terrorism and international conflict. It's deeper-seated. Less and less children are growing up with solid spiritual values. By connecting with a church your family is connecting with a Christian community. Our church is made up of many different nationalities from many different denominations. What unites us is the belief that it is vitally important to be connected to God. Through Jesus Christ we are brought into God's family. This gives us an identity, a destiny and a purpose in life. This is what your child is promised in baptism.

Set an example

It's up to you and the church to nurture your child spiritually. Here are some tips:

Make your child aware of God in your home - if you want your child to believe that God speaks to real life situations and values, then she needs to see you seeking God's understanding in your life situations.

Pray with and for the child - if you want your child to believe that prayer is important, then he needs to see you praying and he needs to pray with you.

Set a good example of Christian living - If you want your child to believe that what God has to say to his or her life is important, then he or she needs to see you reading the Bible and attending worship. The Church has always maintained that religious education begins in the home through the example of parents and participation in family and community worship.

Attend to your own spiritual growth

Whether we like it or not, our children's concept of God is largely determined by what we are as parents. The Christian life is not a one-time event but a pilgrimage. To help our children to grow up into their baptism, to come to the realization that Jesus Christ is their personal Lord and Savior, we must also commit ourselves to accompanying them on the pilgrimage. If some children never seem to mature and some youth never seem to leave adolescence, it may be because the adults in their lives also stopped growing and so were unable to provide them with role models for growth and maturity. If we really love our children, if we really want them to grow in the Christian faith, we need to spend time working at our own growth in faith. We need to work out our own salvation, to continue the journey begun at our own baptism, to engage ourselves seriously in the pilgrimage of faith so we might live faithfully with our children and thereby bring them up in the Christian faith.