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# IN RECOGNITION

These staff members of The Navigators made the major contribution to the prayerful and thoughtful preparation of *Parents and Children*: Rod Beidler, Bruce Das, Ray Hoo, Doug Prensner, Ed Reis, Gene Soderberg, and Bob Sparks. The aim of the study is to provide parents with biblical principles and patterns that lead to dynamic family growth in love, and to harmony in their relationships with God and their families.

In addition, appreciation is due to the wives of the staff members, who provided help and ideas as the project developed; to other Navigator staff members who participated in various stages of planning and preparing the study; and to a large number of staff, pastors, and lay men and women who field-tested the manuscript.

CHAPTER 1

# GOALS FOR PARENTS

RAISING children is a God-given privilege and requires thorough preparation as well as commitment. Successfully building a God-fearing family requires patience, diligence, and an understanding of some foundational biblical principles.

## CHILDREN ARE A GIFT FROM GOD

1. Read Psalm 127:3-5, and summarize what this passage says about children.

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2. What view of children (or grandchildren) is given in these passages?

Genesis 33:4-5

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GOALS FOR PARENTS

Proverbs 17:6 \_\_\_\_\_  
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Matthew 19:14 \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. Hannah, the mother of Samuel, had been childless for many years before his birth. Read her prayer in 1 Samuel 1:10-11, God's answer to the prayer (1:19-20), and Hannah's response to His answer (1:27-28). How would you describe Hannah's attitude toward children?

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**THE  
RESPONSIBILITY  
OF PARENTS**

4. What responsibilities are assigned to fathers in Ephesians 6:4 and Colossians 3:21?

GOALS FOR PARENTS

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How would you explain these responsibilities in your own words?

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How can a wife help her husband in fulfilling these responsibilities?

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GOALS FOR PARENTS

5. Although a man's responsibility for his children's instruction is clear, the primary command given to him regarding his family is to love his wife, as indicated in Ephesians 5:25, Colossians 3:19, and 1 Peter 3:7. Read each of these passages. If a husband practices these principles, what effect do you think it would have on his children?

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What effect do you think it would have if they are *not* practiced?

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6. In Titus 2:4-5, Paul gave guidelines for training young women in their responsibilities to their families. List these guidelines, and tell why you think it is important for a mother to practice them.

GOALS FOR PARENTS

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7. Read Deuteronomy 6:1-9. This passage includes commands Moses received from God to pass on to the people of Israel. Why did God give these commands? (verse 2)

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How were these truths to be passed on to their children? (verses 6-9)

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GOALS FOR PARENTS

Describe in your own words the kind of relationships the parents were to have with God. (verse 5)

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Why do you think it was important for the parents to have these commands upon their hearts? (verse 6)

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8. Look again at Deuteronomy 6:7. What are some of the best “teachable moments” you can use in your family to teach your children God’s commandments?

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GOALS FOR PARENTS

9. Read God’s purpose for choosing Abraham in Genesis 18:18-19. What was Abraham’s responsibility toward his children?

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10. Explain how the principles you observe in the passages below can be applied to your responsibility as a parent.

2 Corinthians 12:14-15

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1 Timothy 5:8

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**A PROMISE FOR PARENTS**

11. God gives a conditional promise to parents in Proverbs 22:6—“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.” In the *Modern Language Bible\** (Berkeley version) this verse is “Educate a child according to his life requirements; even when he is old he will not veer from it.” Paraphrase this verse in your own words on the next page.

*\*Modern Language Bible*, © 1969 by the Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

## GOALS FOR PARENTS

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Three important concepts can be identified from this verse:

- (1) Training is an essential process in raising children.
- (2) Parents should have standards and purpose in training children: They should teach each child “in the way he should go.”
- (3) Proper training is not in vain, but brings about a definite result when the child reaches adulthood.

## SEEING OUR CHILDREN MATURE

12. Read Luke 2:52. In what four areas did Jesus grow as a child?

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## GOALS FOR PARENTS

Using these four areas as categories, make a list below of some attitudes and abilities you would like your children to have by the time they are ready to leave your family and become independent. These would be qualities or abilities you feel they will need in order to become the persons God intends them to be. You may want to make separate lists in some areas for sons and daughters, or perhaps a separate list for each child.

*Mental*—In this area you could include mental abilities and attitudes. You might want to list educational accomplishments as well.

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*Physical*—What will your children need to know about their bodies in order to properly treat them as temples of the Holy Spirit?

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**GOALS FOR PARENTS**

*Spiritual*—What will your children need to know, experience, be, and do to grow spiritually? What should characterize their relationship with God?

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*Social*—How will they need to relate to others—Christians and non-Christians?

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If you are doing this study with your spouse, plan a time to discuss and combine your lists. Then pray together for each child according to what you have written.

**APPLICATION**

(In the application section at the end of each chapter you may find it helpful to discuss what you have written with your spouse and perhaps with others in the family.)

13. Prayerfully review your answers in this chapter. Summarize on the next page the principles you studied which most impressed you.

**GOALS FOR PARENTS**

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14. List any need in your life relating to your responsibility as a parent which you believe you should work on at this time.

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What passage of Scripture in this chapter relates to this need?

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What specific action will you take?

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How will you evaluate your progress?

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## GOALS FOR PARENTS

### **SUGGESTED FAMILY PROJECT**

(This project, and those listed at the end of later chapters, can be a valuable exercise for practicing the scriptural principles you have studied in this chapter. As you read the instructions for the projects, think of creative ways to make them meaningful and enjoyable for each member of your family. Plan to include every child who is old enough to enjoy the time with you. If your children are older, allow time for deeper discussion of thoughts and questions they may have, and let them help you plan the project.)

Read together Luke 2:41-52, and talk specifically about the four areas of growth mentioned in the last verse. Mention some way you have observed each child mature in the four areas recently. Then have each of them talk about a specific way he would like to continue growing in one or more of these areas. You may want to discuss with your children how they can begin working on these goals.