

RESTORING YOUR FAMILY'S FOUNDATION

STUDY FIVE

Delighting in Your Kids and Grandkids

Psalm 127:3–5; Proverbs 3:11–12

When children feel their parents accept and enjoy them, it makes a world of difference in their sense of security. There's nothing like having fun with our kids.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

LOOKING back on your childhood, would you say that your home was a fun place to grow up? Were you loved and accepted? Was there lots of laughter? Did you sense that your mom and dad delighted in you?

Pastor Chuck Swindoll once asked these questions to a group of young parents, and to his surprise only two of them raised their hands. Most could not say that fun, laughter, and delight were hallmarks of their home.

Pastor Chuck's questions prompt us to reflect on our childhood . . . and to consider our parenting style. Has the stressful pace of life flattened your smile into a tense frown? Is your schedule so busy that you have no time to delight in your children?

If the delight has seeped out of your family life, how do you welcome it back? For starters, make time for relaxed fun. Also, you need help from the source of pure joy—the heart of the heavenly Father.



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Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

S05
1

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Psalm 127:3–5; Proverbs 3:11–12



PREPARE YOUR HEART

The face of our heavenly Father beams over His children. The psalmist declared that “He delights in every detail of [our] lives” (Psalm 37:23). David relished God’s favor, writing, “He rescued me because he delights in me” (18:19). God delights in you too. Say those last four words of Psalm 18:19 aloud: *He delights in me*.

In the space below, write a prayer welcoming the Lord’s love and asking the Father to help you reflect His heart toward your children.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

The focus of our study is God’s view of children in Psalm 127, which is a Song of Ascent. Pilgrims traveled in family groups to Jerusalem for annual festivals, and as they ascended the slopes of Mount Zion, they sang their beliefs in songs such as this psalm.

Read [Psalm 127](#), imagining family members—from young to old—walking hand-in-hand, singing these words. What family values stand out in your initial reading?

Let’s take a closer look at verses 127:3–5, which will help us see our children through God’s eyes.



Delighting in Your Kids and Grandkids

Psalm 127:3–5; Proverbs 3:11–12



Observation: Seeing Children through God's Eyes

A helpful *observation* technique is to identify the key words in a text. These words are the stakes in the ground that brace the passage and lead to interpretation. Highlight the words in the following verses that describe *God's perspective of children*.

*Children are a gift from the LORD;
they are a reward from him.*

*Children born to a young man
are like arrows in a warrior's hands.*

How joyful is the man whose quiver is full of them!

He will not be put to shame when he confronts his accusers at the city gates. (Psalm 127:3–5)

Write down the metaphors you find in the space below. In the interpretation phase, we'll probe their meaning.

Psalm 127 isn't talking about literal arrows and literal warriors. This is picturesque language designed to make us imagine. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Delighting in Your Kids and Grandkids

Psalms 127:3–5; Proverbs 3:11–12



Interpretation: The Meaning of *Gifts, Rewards, and Arrows*

The central message that these metaphors communicate in Psalm 127:3–5 is this: *children are valuable*. How does the psalmist illustrate their value? Through three primary images.

Children Are a Gift—Psalm 127:3

What does it mean, “Children are a gift” (Psalm 127:3)? How is this truth different than what the world says about children?

Who is the giver of children? Not “mother nature” or a biological process, but *the Lord*. In the previous *Searching the Scriptures* study, we examined how the Lord forms children in the womb. Reflect on [139:13–16](#) and pay close attention to the line, “Children are a gift *from the LORD*” (127:3, emphasis added). What *value* does the psalmist give children by saying *the Lord* is the giver?

Children are a gift, not a liability. The child comes not as an accident, not as a tax deduction, not as a burden but as a gift to open and delight in. No one else can give you the child but the One who has made the child, the Lord. Children are made by God, given by God. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Delighting in Your Kids and Grandkids

Psalm 127:3–5; Proverbs 3:11–12

Children Are a Reward—Psalm 127:3

Children are also “a reward” from the Lord (Psalm 127:3). How are children a “reward”? What does this concept imply about the way we view our children and how they view themselves?

*What a difference it makes in children when they realize how the Lord has satisfied us by bringing them into our lives. Pause and let your child know how special he or she is to you.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

Children Are Like Arrows—Psalm 127:4

The next figure of speech is a simile: “Children . . . are like arrows in a warrior’s hands” (Psalm 127:4). What does this concept mean? How are children in the home of their parents like arrows in the hands of an archer?



Delighting in Your Kids and Grandkids

Psalm 127:3–5; Proverbs 3:11–12

An archer aims and shoots an arrow toward a target. Likewise, parents guide their children toward a good goal. What qualities do parents need to help their children reach their potential?

Summarize how these three metaphors, “gift,” “reward,” and “arrows,” communicate the value of your children? Start thinking about how to communicate these concepts to your child, and we’ll consider ways in the application section.

Parents launch their children toward goals that are important to their children, that fit how their children are put together. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Delighting in Your Kids and Grandkids

Psalm 127:3–5; Proverbs 3:11–12



Correlation: Characteristics of a Caring Mother and Father

Paul compared his relationship with the Thessalonian believers as “a mother feeding and caring for her children” (1 Thessalonians 2:7) and as “a father treats his own children” (2:11). Read the full passage, [1 Thessalonians 2:5–12](#), and write down the words Paul used to describe his parental role with the believers. In what ways did Paul model a mother? A father?

What priorities for parenting can you conclude from Paul’s list?



Application: Practical Ways to Communicate Delight

How can we follow through with these biblical principles for parenting? Let’s fill our homes with joy by putting into practice four “Ls” of delighting in children.

- 1) *Delight in **lingering** around them.* Enjoy spending time with your children and having meals with them with the television off and no distracting handheld devices.
- 2) *Delight in **listening** to them.* Pay attention when they have something to say. Ask questions and discover their dreams.



Delighting in Your Kids and Grandkids

Psalms 127:3–5; Proverbs 3:11–12

- 3) *Delight in **learning** alongside them.* Do projects together, read to your children, and grow together.
- 4) *Delight in **laughing** with them.* Funny stuff happens in the family all the time. Lighten up! Laugh about life and tell humorous stories from your past. Having fun together is an essential ingredient in delighting in your child.

Which of these lessons can you apply this week in your home?

Need more practical suggestions on how to delight in your children? Here are a few. The possibilities are endless!

- Make a surprise visit to your elementary-school-aged child at school.
- Ask your adult child how you can pray for him or her each week.
- Write and frame a prayer for your child, praising God for him or her, and naming unique things that you love about him or her.
- For each of your children, write words of encouragement in dry-erase marker on their bathroom mirror.
- Take your children out for interview dates: take lots of selfies, eat yummy food, and ask them interview questions.
- Make a list of all the gifts you see in each child. Pray through them, dedicating each gift to God.
- Make sure that when you connect with your children (no matter their age), you look directly at *them*. Put ALL of your devices away and communicate nonverbally that you are listening.



Delighting in Your Kids and Grandkids

Psalm 127:3–5; Proverbs 3:11–12

Picture one of the children in your life. Jot down some ways that you intend to delight in him or her today.

Love cherishes and nourishes, it discovers, gets involved, and listens with care. Love draws out the other person, boosts his or her self-esteem, and is fuel for fun in your home. Relax the tension and smile! Delight in your children and fill your home with laughter that lasts a lifetime in your children's memories.



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, You are the Master Builder of my heart and my home life. By Your grace, the sun will rise tomorrow on a new day to hold a loved one's hand, to choose joy instead of gloom, to encourage, praise, and celebrate the treasures in my home. Help me, Lord, to love from Your heart . . . and laugh! In the name of Jesus, amen.

