



## Childrens Ministry

1. If the person found quotes about mothers, have that person read them. Also, the two jokes about mothers.
2. Read the article that is to be handed out. Get it printed off. It is titled, "Children Can Empower Parents and Adults".
3. Jot down things you might say in responding to the discussion questions.
4. Fill in the questionnaire yourself.
5. Accept what is being said. For many, this may be a subject they have not talked about with others. So, here we are providing time for interaction that might be embarrassing or confronting, yet uplifting.
6. Pray for the people in the class and for the discussions that they might be helpful, supportive, and enlightening.
7. God also provides what is needed to fulfill that calling to be ministers to their children.
8. Ask a person who has internet access to bring back three quotes about children.
9. Ask another person who has internet access to bring back two jokes about children.

This session lays open a way of looking at children, perhaps one's own children or grandchildren, in a way most people have not thought about. The leader has the challenge of keeping the class on target, and not drifting away from each new insight the class is confronting.

Many congregations see their responsibility is to educate children, as in Sunday School and Vacation Bible School. When a child gets older, there is often Confirmation or something like that, then possibly a youth group to join. In most cases, this looks like a one-way street, with adults educating and bringing the children along. Little is expected of the children to provide anything, except maybe some humor during a children's sermon, or doing some chores at home. **All of this can be good as far as it goes but it does little to build a strong relationship of obeying and honoring.**

The letter to the Ephesians opens up another way of seeing children. It talks about equipping people in a congregation for their ministries. In the midst of laying out what this would look like in Ephesians 5:21-6:9, we have the children being instructed to obey and honor their parents. In this letter, there is the reality spoken that believers are "in Christ" or inside the family of God through Christ. Since children are in that family and have an assignment to fulfill, can we not say that they also have a ministry that will build up the body of Christ, the community of faith?

When we ask the question that way, it becomes more apparent that these children do have a ministry of their own. Conducting a ministry of any kind involves taking on certain responsibilities. Primarily, their ministry involves the way they relate to their parents. Parents don't need hassles, setbacks, or rebellious kids. They don't have to wake the child up when that child has their own alarm clock. Parents raise children to adulthood. **The more responsibilities a child takes on for their own well-being, while also honoring their parents, the more adult-like they become. Age-appropriate**



## Adults Saving Kids

**responsibilities are waiting for them as they grow up. We know the problems children get into. We know their laxness drains whatever energy the parents have to a very low point.** When breakdowns like this develop, we have to ask ourselves, “Has this child ever seen he or she has a ministry before God that he or she is responsible for?”

Obviously, when a child is very young, they are going to have a hard time grasping what we are talking about. Nevertheless, whether they know it or not, their lives are having an impact on their parents and on the congregation. At younger ages, that impact comes mainly through their parents and the way they relate to those teaching them at church. They have the ability to make life more fun and meaningful for those who are in contact with them. They also can create havoc and discouragement for those same people.

So, what is it about children that has Isaiah 11:6b saying, “A little child shall lead them”? We understand this passage is talking about a future time. Yet, when we think about it, how many children, for instance, get involved in a congregation, and their involvement leads to the parents starting to attend and possibly becoming members?

It is often when a child is young that they get a vision of what they will do with their life, and their parents can do much to support and encourage them in that. When my wife had her tonsils out at age six, she came out of the hospital and saw a picture of a nurse with a white cap worn in those days. She said, “I want to be a nurse.” Her parents supported her in that. She became an excellent nurse. As it turned out, her two sisters both decided to be nurses and were great at it as well.

Lastly, there is a great gift that children can give their parents and also the congregation. They can pray. We might easily forget God listens to children’s prayers. They can be taught to pray and encouraged to pray. Remember Jesus tells us they are first in the kingdom (Matthew 18:1-5). There could be a special time of the day when family leaders sit with them and pray together. They could begin to use the ‘Loving Others By Praying For Them’ booklet available at [adultssavingkids.org](http://adultssavingkids.org).

In this session, there is the chance God will put into the minds of the participants a new vision for their offspring. That can lead to a new awareness of who they can be, what they can acknowledge, for what they can give thanks, and for new ways they can be with their youth. As leaders, these are good points to consider and pray about before going to the session.

The thoughts in this leader’s guide are meant to spark something in you, the leader, as you think of some of the experiences in your own life. They can also offer some ways of looking at things that might be thrown out there for discussion.