

# GROWING UP IN GOD'S FAMILY

## The Delights of Childhood

1 Corinthians 13:11–12



### LET'S BEGIN HERE

There is a well-worn path stretching across every adult's life. It is impossible to grow up without traveling down that path. To retrace our steps, reviewing the sights and sounds that emerge from the time tunnel, often brings the sting of pain and the struggle of confusion. Why? Because the path is usually strewn with piles of litter. That path is the path of *childhood*. What is true physically is equally true spiritually. How essential is a healthy, happy childhood in the family of God . . . yet how rare! As we shall see, growth toward maturity requires our passing through this stage, learning certain truths, and developing certain skills that help equip us for life.



### LET'S DIG DEEPER

#### 1. The Growth Cycle: A Brief Overview

- A. Four Distinct Stages
- B. Transition from Infancy to Childhood

#### 2. Analysis of Spiritual Childhood: A Biblical Survey

- A. General Observations
  - Children have unique distinctions.
  - Children need parental accommodations.
  - Children require firm supervision.
- B. Delightful Strengths
  - Intellectual openness and availability
  - Emotional dependence
  - Spiritual hunger and readiness



## Quotable

*Do you teach children? Give them the gospel. They're ready to take the hand of the Savior.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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### LET'S LIVE IT

#### An Examination of Where I Am: A Personal Evaluation

If you are in the child stage of your faith, don't hold back your enthusiasm and sense of wonder! But be sure to ask lots of questions.

If you've moved beyond this stage, take time to listen to younger believers, nurse their scrapes, and allow them to be childlike in their newfound faith in Christ.



### LISTEN TO CHUCK

#### *A Prayer of Encouragement*

Father . . .

Give us patience, perseverance, grace, tact. Round the sharp corners of our lives so that people are not bruised when they're around us. Open our arms to embrace.

Help us to be discerning and know how much to expose to a child's mind, lest we overexpose it and create confusion in the whole area of shame and moral directives.

Help us as adults, while growing, to keep on in the process of telling others of the Savior, being sensitive to them in their needs and accepting them where they are.

Make us willing to give up our rights for the good of those who are weak and aren't yet where we are.

Graciously help us to be like Your Son, who loved children and who Himself was at one time a child.

Amen.



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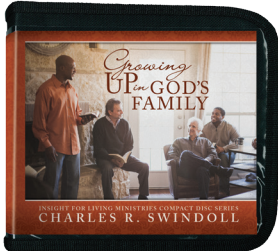
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The Delights of Childhood

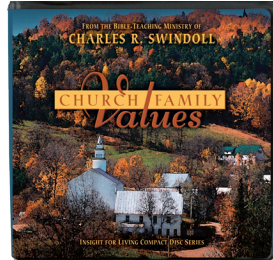
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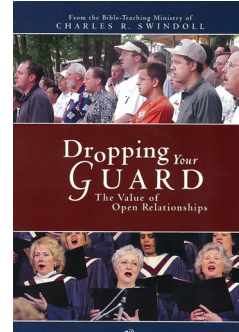
## Tools for Digging Deeper



**Growing Up in  
God's Family**  
by Charles R. Swindoll  
CD series



**Church Family Values**  
by Charles R. Swindoll  
CD series



**Dropping Your Guard:  
The Value of Open  
Relationships**  
by Charles R. Swindoll  
softcover book

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