

BIBLICAL PARENTING STUDY SEVEN

Delightful Memories Your Children Won't Forget

Psalm 127:3–128:6

Think of yourself as a curator for your family's museum of memories. You're the one who watches over the treasures, who realizes their value and passes them on to the next generation.

—Charles R. Swindoll

SUPPOSE you curated a museum that housed items from your family's past. What treasures would you see on exhibit? A flowing wedding gown might hang elegantly in a glass case. On a pedestal might rest the keys to the old family car—a used clunker but big enough to fit three kids, the dog, and enough camping equipment for a week at Yosemite! To the right might be the birthday memories section, with the school memories wing around the corner. They would all be here in your family museum—your most prized treasures and the memories they inspire.

Your children have their own mental museum of family artifacts. Their memories aren't on display in a building, but they are just as vivid and even more permanent. They will last a lifetime.

Among their treasures are memories of their relationship with you during their years in your home. What would you wish for them to remember about their parents? Psalms 127 and 128 offer an inventory list that we can study together.



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Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

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PREPARE YOUR HEART

Take a few moments to quiet your spirit and invite the Lord to minister to you through His Word. Try to block out thoughts that might distract you from hearing His voice. The psalmist's prayer can guide you as you pause now to pray.

*Turn my eyes from worthless things,
and give me life through your word. (Psalm 119:37)*



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

In Psalms 127 and 128, we find *three messages* that say to our children, “You are important!” In addition, the psalmist teaches parents *four investments* they can make to their children's memory bank.



Observation: Laying the Groundwork

In the *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, the first step in the observation phase is to examine the genre (type of literature) and background of these two Psalms.¹

Genre and Background

To help you understand the genre and background of the text, consult a good study Bible, for example, *The Swindoll Study Bible*. Take a moment to review the introductory article on the book of Psalms in *The Swindoll Study Bible* and at the insight.org website, *Insights on the Bible*. Do any interesting points stand out that you'd like to write down?



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Psalms 127 and 128 are Pilgrim Psalms, also known as Songs of Ascent. As pilgrims traveling in family groups to Jerusalem for annual festivals, the Israelites ascended the dusty hillsides and the steps leading to the temple singing their beliefs in songs. *The Swindoll Study Bible* explains the role of these psalms in the people's spiritual life and family life:

The Psalms of Ascent were to the Israelite people like what our Christmas carols and patriotic songs are today—familiar to everyone and able to stir up shared values and memories. . . . The Psalms of Ascent, sung from memory several times a year, served as reminders of faith, forgiveness, family, children, peace, hope, brotherhood, sacrifice, and right attitudes toward God and people.²

Overview and Observations

Read these two family-values Psalms straight through and make observations of each section as listed below. What was the psalmist teaching about God and family life? Write down what you observe under the following headings which divide Psalms 127–128 into four sections.

The Foundation of the Home (*Psalm 127:1–2*)

The Expansion of the Home (*127:3–5*)



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The Child-Rearing Years (*Psalm 128:1–3*)

The Later Years (*128:4–6*)

The Lord's values are the true framework of the home. Without His family values, the time and money that we spend building our house is in vain. What good are energy-efficient windows and a watertight roof when greed, envy, shame, and criticism are seeping into the hearts of the people living inside the house? Thankfully, we're not left to our own skills to build a lasting home. God is at work in our families!



Interpretation: Three Messages That Say, “You’re Important”

As Architect and Master Builder, the Lord builds what's most important into your home. At the top of his materials list for your home life is the center beam of *communicating to your children with your attitudes and actions that they are important*.



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Using the select tool, highlight the words in the following Psalm that describe a positive 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.

*How joyful are those who fear the LORD—
all who follow his ways!*

You will enjoy the fruit of your labor.

How joyful and prosperous you will be! (Psalm 127:3–128:2)

Without realizing, we may be tossing our children or grandchildren a look or a tone that says, “You’re a hassle. You’re in the way. Don’t bother me.” These barbed messages cut deep. Instead, determine to give your children life-enriching messages—such as the following three that emerge from the words you highlighted above.

“You Are a Gift and Reward”

The first message to our children is *you are a gift and reward*. Brainstorm some words and ways that you can communicate to your child or grandchild that he or she is a gift and reward? For example, one word to use is *treasure*, and a way to communicate that is to treasure the time you have with him or her.



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“You Are Worth Guiding”

The second message that builds a sense of importance in our children is *you are worth guiding*. The archer and arrow images portray the idea of guidance. Like an archer aims and shoots an arrow toward a target, parents take the time to guide their child toward a good goal. It takes patience and practice to help a child build the habits necessary to reach his or her potential. Use the space below to think of your child's potential goals and how you can guide him or her toward those targets?

“You Bring Joy”

And the third message is *you bring joy*. The NLT Bible version captures the meaning of the Hebrew word that is translated “blessing” in the NIV and NASB. It means “happy” or “joyful.” Children learn the powerful role of happiness and joy when they grow up in an atmosphere of happiness and joy.

Children thrive on fun! Fun communicates that you're glad to be with them, that joy accompanies their presence. Oh, the blessings of laughter and play! Can you list some of them?

Years from now, when your child strolls through his or her museum of memories, the evenings spent having fun with mom and dad will be their most prized treasures. The Master Builder can help you create a positive, fun-filled atmosphere that fills your home with encouragement, praise, security, approval, acceptance, friendship, belonging, and love.



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Fruitful Results

What is the outcome of communicating these messages through our attitudes and actions? Psalm 128:3–6 paints a portrait of family life that we'd love to hang in our hall of memories:

*Your wife will bear children as a vine bears grapes,
your household lush as a vineyard,
The children around your table
as fresh and promising as young olive shoots.
Stand in awe of God's Yes.
Oh, how he blesses the one who fears God!
Enjoy the good life in Jerusalem
every day of your life.
And enjoy your grandchildren.
Peace to Israel! (MSG)*

Take some time to imagine what it would be like to walk through your own vineyard or olive tree grove—a vast field of row after row of grapevines or olive trees, hanging low with deep-colored fruit. How do the images of a lush vineyard or rich olive grove strengthen the psalmist's message about the value of children in your home?

When parents acknowledge that each child is a gift and a reward, believe me, the children learn they're important. When parents recognize that they must give time for guidance like an arrow shot from a bow, the children learn they're important. They've taken time for you because they see you as valuable. —Chuck Swindoll



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Correlation: Reflecting on Our Own Museum of Memories

Adults whose museum is full of painful memories sometimes drag those old hurts home with them. If you're having trouble filling your home with messages of value, worth, and joy, ask the Lord to search your heart. Are there some wounds that need God's healing touch? Read *Psalm 34:17–18 and 147:3* and write down the areas in your life that need God's special ministry to your soul.

If the shame and heartache from your past echo in your words to your children, then take a courageous step and get help to resolve the hurts from your past. Speak to your pastor or Christian counselor who can guide you on the path of healing so that you can enjoy God's fruit of joy in your home.



Application: Four Investments to Your Child's Memory Bank

Reflecting on the lush images of Psalms 127–128, as well as the principles we highlighted, let's wrap up our study with some final applications. Here are four ways you can invest in your children's museum of memories.

- *Make time for your child or grandchild.* Never underestimate the value of simply spending time together.
- *Value your child or grandchild.* Celebrate your children's accomplishments, birthdays, and special occasions. Be present at their events. Let them know you care.
- *Mom and dad, love one another.* Children long to know that you're still in love with your spouse and that you'll never outgrow your love for each other.
- *Demonstrate an authentic walk of faith in your home.* Don't just talk about your walk with God, live it out every day.



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Now, it's time to usher these applications through the door into your home life. Write down four ways that you plan to put these principles into action. It may be as simple as bending down to your child's eye level and saying, "I love you," followed by a big hug.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Now, put these plans into action today and fill your museum with wonderful memories to last a lifetime!



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, You are the Master Builder of my heart and my home life. You are a safe place to bring my admissions of failure. 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.

ENDNOTES

1. To learn about Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* method of Bible study, go to the Web page, "[How to Study the Bible for Yourself](#)."
2. Charles R. Swindoll, "The Southern Steps of the Temple Mount: Reminders of the Pilgrim Psalms, Psalms 120–134," *The Swindoll Study Bible* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2017), 728.



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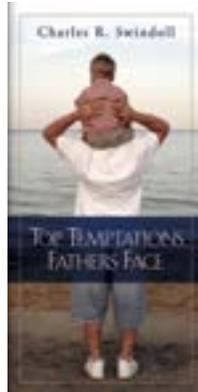
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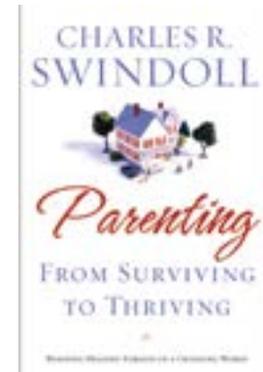
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For the 2020 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of Pastoral Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.

