



It's possible to raise our kids with Christian-ish stuff, but not raise them up with Christ. It's possible to raise them dependent, but not raise them up. It's possible not to raise them at all. But to raise them...up...with Christ...involves complete self-surrender and authentic sacrificial love. There is no substitute. There can't be. If there was, Jesus would have chose it.

These questions are intended to deepen your experience of the message. Use them for your personal or family study time, or with an open Bible as you share the good news with your neighbor.

Group Ice-Breakers:

(1) What do you love most about Jesus?

(2) If we "looked to Jesus the perfecter of our faith," what would it mean to model for our children what Jesus does for us?

RAISED WITH CHRIST. Read Col 3:1-4.

The goal of every Christian home is for our children to be "raised with Christ." Yes—we want our children to choose Jesus, be baptized, and live a Christian life. But we also want them to experience Christ in our homes as they grow. Discuss.

RAISE THEM UP. Read Eph 6:4. Paul says "bring them up." This implies growth upward and outward—eventually to be independent. How can we mistakenly raise our children to be eternally dependent? How can we instill rules rather than principles, creating followers rather than leaders? Discuss.

RAISE THEM WITH CHRIST. Christ (the person) cannot be substituted with Christian activities or even Christian principles. Discuss each of the following scenarios which can be good in themselves, but can also be examples of idolatry and selfishness, depending on our aims:

- Youth sports and societies
- Christian clubs, camps, competitions and conventions

RAISE THEM WITH CHRIST. Read Eph 6:4. What is the "discipline and instruction of the Lord"? It is easy to assume this means to make sure they can memorize verses. But it actually refers to them knowing what it means to receive instruction from the Lord. For them to experience Christ and to learn from Him. Discuss.

RAISE THEM MODELING CHRIST. Read Hebrews 12:1-2. If we are called to "look to Jesus" as the perfecter of faith, there is no area of life where Christ is not the model—including parenting. Discuss.

"Who for the joy set before him." How can we mistakenly see parenting as a required chore to get through rather than a joyful privilege in which to invest?

"Endured the cross." How can we mistakenly see parenting as a power trip (people to rule and control, extensions of ourselves) rather than people to serve to the point of death?

"Despising the shame." How can we mistakenly see parenting as a way to fulfill our own needs and cater to their wants?