

THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF CHILDREN



Let the Children Come to Me, Ira Thomas

*Children are a gift from the Lord.
Psalm₁127:3*

Children are a gift from the Lord
to a father and a mother.



They belong to Him.
As such, parents are to steward
these precious ones as unto the Lord.

Definition of “child”

- 1) The immediate progeny of parents.
- 2) One unfixed in principles and weak in knowledge, judgment and experience; one young in grace.

(Webster's 1828 Dictionary)

Each child is unique!



Children are His workmanship!



*For Thou didst form my inward parts;
Thou didst weave me in my mother's womb.
I will give thanks to Thee
for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
Wonderful are Thy works
and my soul knows it very well. (Psalm 139:13-14)*

Each child is made
in God's image
and destined
for immortality!

Genesis 1:26

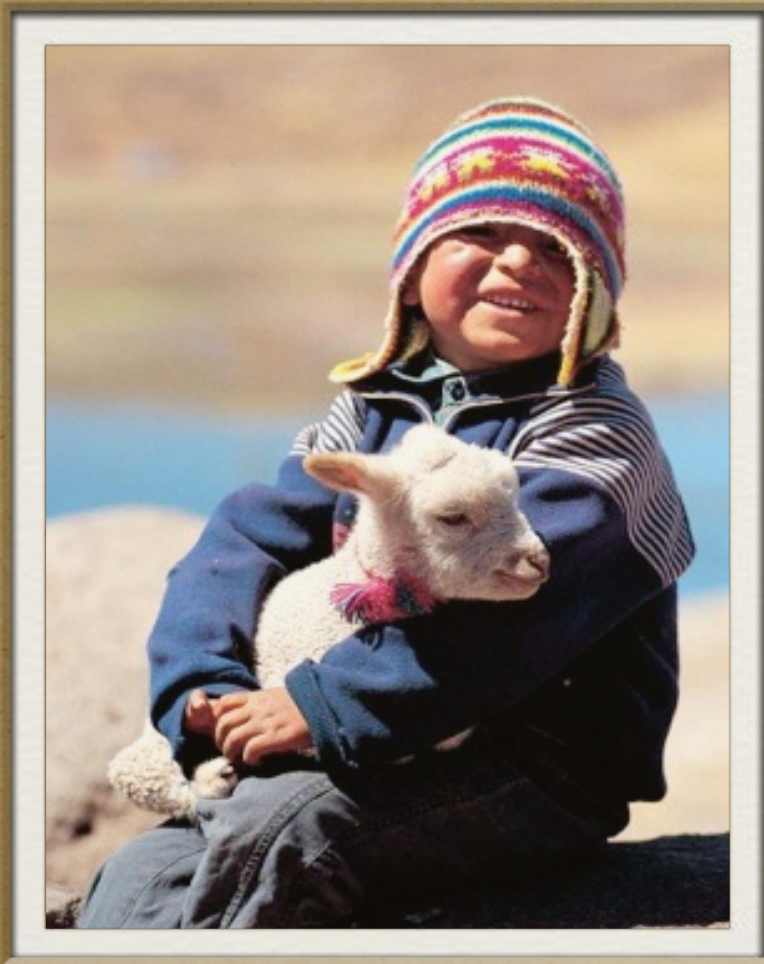
Psalm 8:4-6

*We are His workmanship
created in Christ Jesus
for good works,
which God prepared beforehand,
that we should walk in them.
(Ephesians 2:10)*



Brazilian children

Every child is a promise . . .



Peruvian shepherd boy

with a name,
a passion,
a story,
and a place
in His Story!

There are no ordinary children!



Colombian children in national costume

Each child is ennobled
with dignity and worth!

Genesis 1:26-27

*Thou hast made man a little
lower than God,
And dost crown him with
glory and majesty!
Thou dost make him to rule
over the works of Thy hand.
(Psalm 8:5-6)*



Young Bolivian girl

God looks at the heart,
not the outward appearance.

1 Samuel 16:7

Each child is born
with the fallen nature of Adam.

Each has evil inclinations and folly.

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. (Ps 51:5)

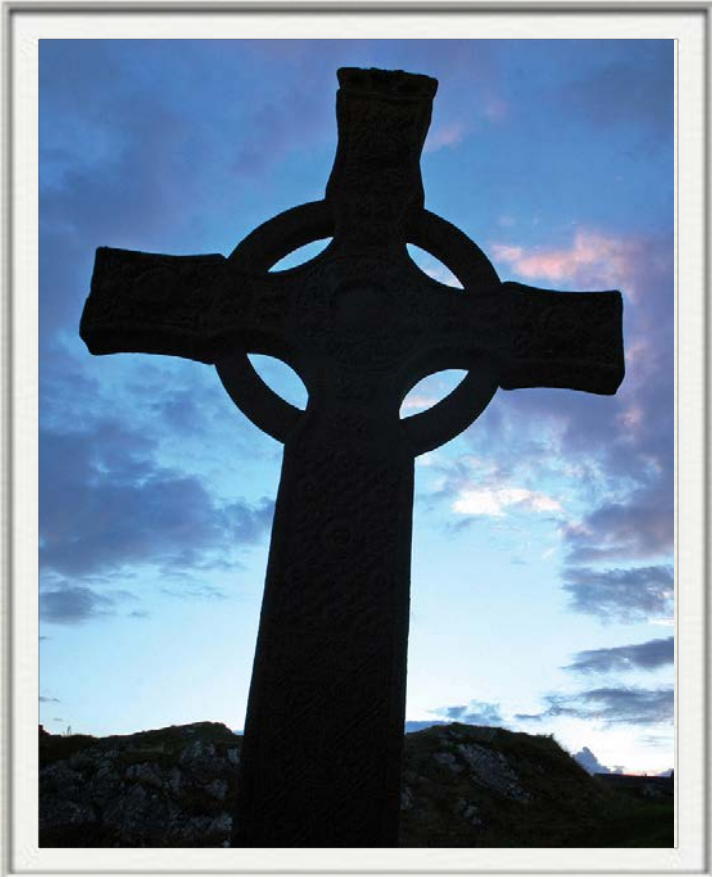
The intent of man's heart is evil from his youth. (Ge 8:21)

The wicked are estranged from the womb: those who speak lies go astray from birth. (Ps 58:3)

There is none righteous, no not one...there is none who seeks for God; . . . there is none who does good, there is not even one. (Ro 3:10-12)

Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child. (Pr 22:15)

Each child is a sinner and needs Jesus Christ as Savior.



*All have sinned and fall short
of the glory of God. (Ro 3:23)*

*For God so loved the world
that He gave His only
begotten Son, that whoever
should believe in Him
should not perish but
have eternal life. (Jn 3:16)*

Children need the grace of God
and the gospel of forgiveness
through Christ.
They must be born again.

*I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you;
and I will remove the heart of stone
from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. (Eze 36:26)*

*Keep thy heart with all diligence
for out of it flow the issues of life. (Pr 4:23)*

Jesus' View of Children



They were bringing children to Him so that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked them. . . . And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands on them.

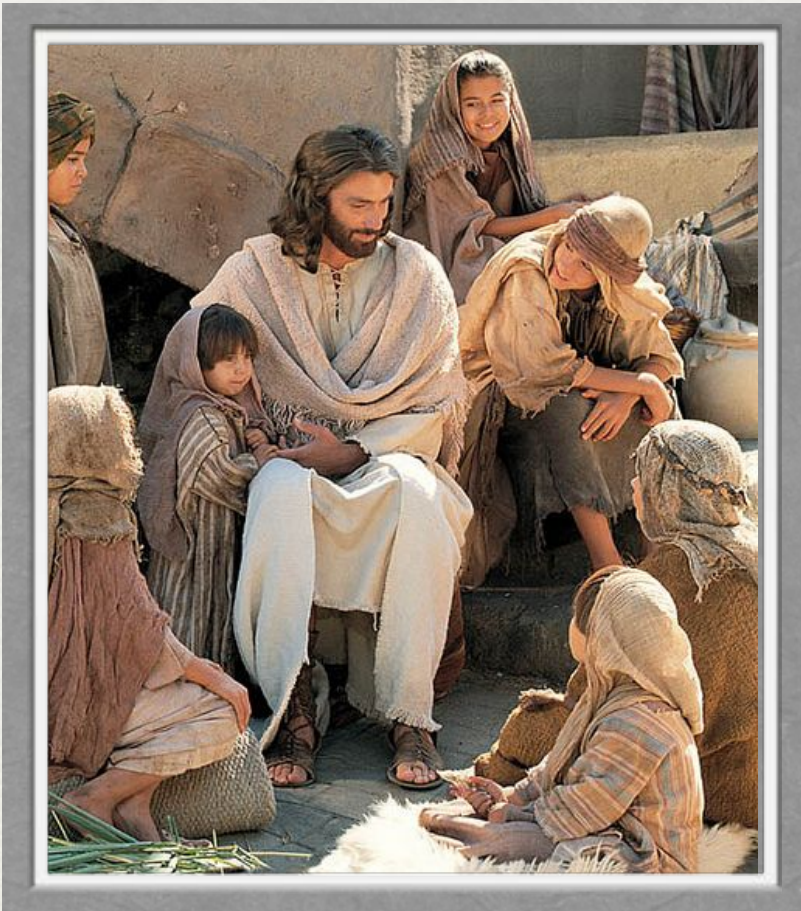
(Mark 10:13,16)

Each child is imputed with unique value
regardless of his station in life
or his abilities!



Mexican orphans

Jesus chose a child to demonstrate the qualities that constitute greatness and humility in the kingdom of God.



*Whoever humbles himself
as this child, he is the
greatest in the kingdom
of heaven. And whoever
receives one such child in
My name receives Me.*

(Matthew 18:3-5)



Bolivian school children

Each child is
fashioned by God
for an appointed
time and place
in history!

Acts 17:24-27
Jeremiah 1:5-6

God has a plan
for each child:
To prosper and not
harm; to give each
a future and a hope!

Psalm 139
Jeremiah 29:11



Peruvian AMO® students

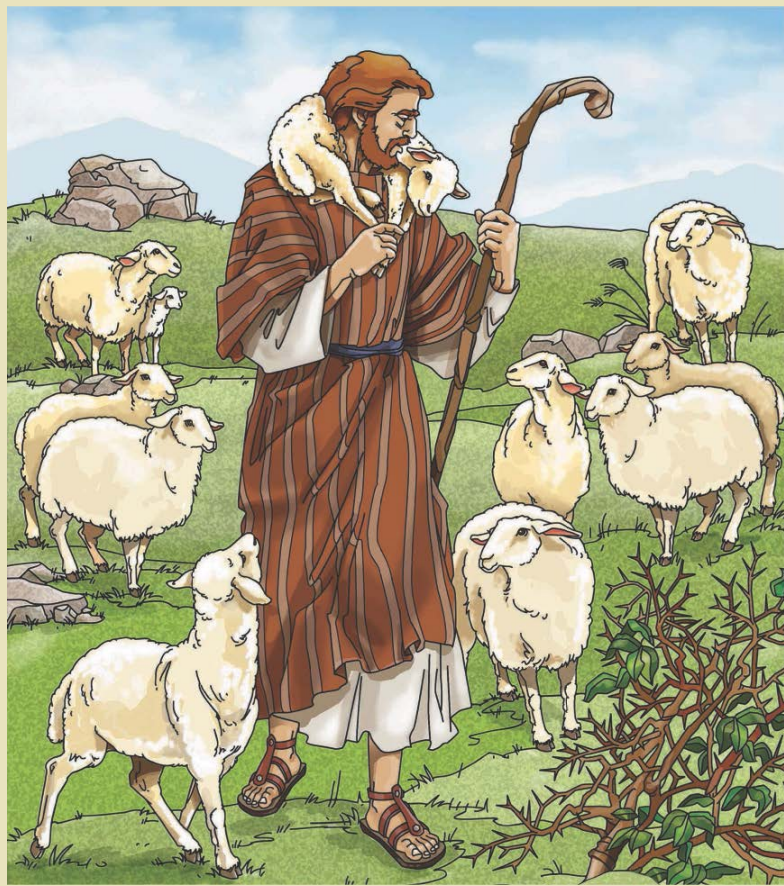


God desires each home
be a vital center
of learning.

*I have chosen him, so that he may
command his children and his
household after him to keep the way
of the LORD. (Genesis 18:19)*

Jesus' Family, unknown artist

Discipling **the whole child** for life and leadership



*When they had finished breakfast,
Jesus said to Simon Peter,
“Simon, son of John, do you love
Me more than these?”*

*He said to Him, “Yes, Lord,
You know that I love You.”*

*Jesus said to him,
“Tend My lambs.”*

(John 21:15)

The Good Shepherd, Mary Britt

As a child, Jesus developed wholistically.

The Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.

He will eat curds and honey at the time He knows enough to refuse evil and choose good. (Isaiah 7:14-15)

The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him. (Luke 2:40)

When He became twelve, they went to Jerusalem at Passover. . . .

After three days, they found Jesus in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them, and asking questions. (Luke 2:46)

He continued in subjection to them [His parents] . . .

And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. (Luke 2:51-52)

The word “feed” contains a wholistic view for discipling children:

- ◆ Nourish the inner man with spiritual food
- ◆ Provide hope and good expectation
- ◆ Cherish
- ◆ Delight
- ◆ Supply the eyes with beauty
- ◆ Guard and protect
- ◆ Tend with gentle care
- ◆ Lead to good pasture for sustained growth



Raising a child for life and leadership begins internally with his heart.

- ◆ Controlling a child's external behavior does not transform the rebellious, unbelieving heart.
- ◆ God is interested in cultivating the child's intellect and heart attitudes, so he will grow to love and worship God and exercise self-governance.
- ◆ Parents must be mindful of the fallen nature of mankind and the basic condition of every child's heart.
- ◆ The heart must be addressed as the fountain of behavior and the conscience as the God-given judge of right and wrong.

The heart is the command center of the child's life.

- ♦ In the Hebrew mindset, the heart directs all the faculties of the soul: mind, will and emotions.

*Watch over your heart with all diligence,
for from it flow the springs of life. (Pr 4:23)*

- ♦ God created the heart of man as the command center for governing all of life.
- ♦ The role of parents is to **express vision and hope** for their children and **inspire** them to a **living relationship with Jesus Christ**.

Parents must guard and protect the gates to their child's inner man.

The metaphor is that of an ancient walled city:

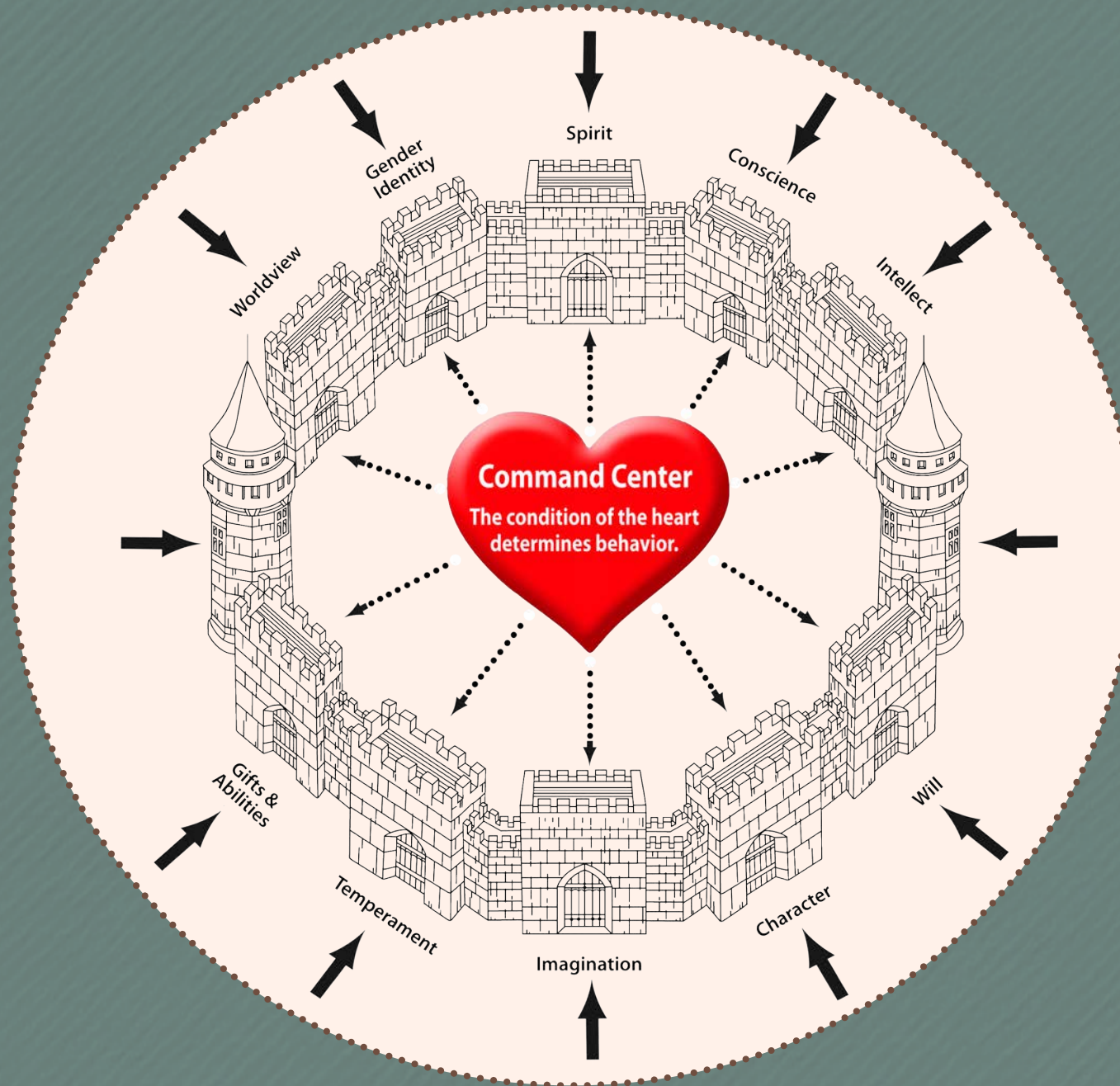
Parents must prayerfully erect a wall of protection around their child's heart through their discipleship and guard the gates or entry points into the child's heart.



In the Scripture,
gates symbolize:

- ◆ Authority
- ◆ Truth
- ◆ Protection

Nurturing and guarding the child's inner man

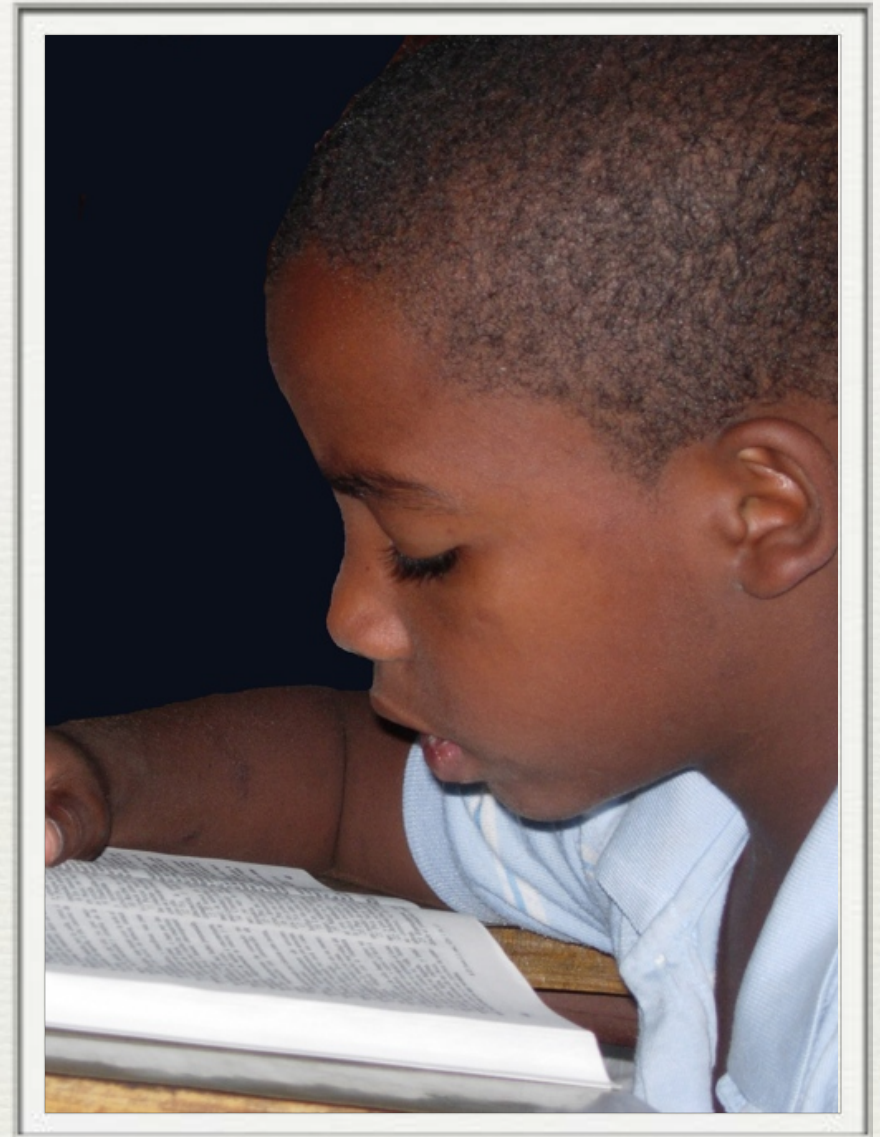


Watch over your heart with all diligence for out of it flow the springs of life. (Pr 4:23)

Every child thirsts
for living water
and hungers for
truth and beauty.

God promises to satisfy
the thirsty soul and
fill it with what is good!

Psalm 107:9



Dominican Republic schoolboy

Two Views of Education

	Traditional	Transformational
View of the Child:	Blank slate; empty; Few gifted and talented	Imago Dei; Full; Each creative and gifted
Goal:	Modified behavior <i>(External)</i>	Transformed heart <i>(Internal)</i>
Spirit of Learning:	Dependent; Leveled; Consumers of facts	Independent; Productive; Masters of subjects
Methods:	Appeal to the external; Entertain and control	Appeal to internal; Inspire and consecrate
Curriculum:	Dumbed down; Piecemeal; Driven by information	Elevated; Whole; Designed by principles
Result:	Socialization of the child; Dependent on others	Attainment of the child's full potential in Christ

What is the current situation of children in your nation?

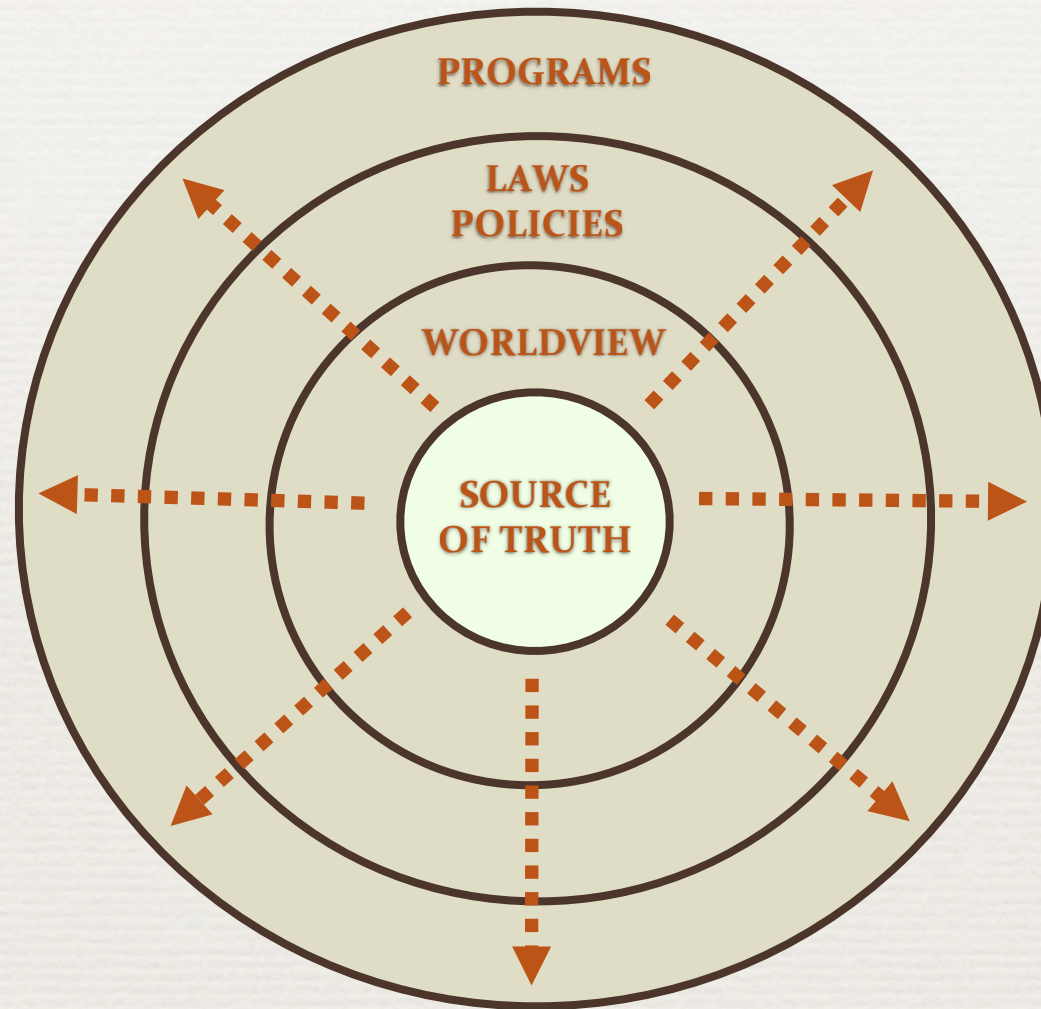
What are the responsibilities of parents?

What is the role of the church?



What are the government policies for children?

Spheres of God-ordained government for the procreation and welfare of man



*Power and authority flow internal to external,
from cause to effect.*

One Teacher's Influence



Building righteous institutions
in ALL the spheres of society



Applying principles in the marketplace



Promoting justice,
kindness,
and humility



Influencing national policy



Teaching and mentoring in
the church and community



Calling forth each
student's full potential



Modeling Christian
love and character



Serving parents



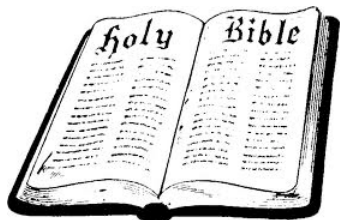
Designing curriculum by biblical principles



Imparting biblical principles and noble vocabulary



Inspiring Christian
imagination



Teaching God's Word



Cultivating the heart for Christ



Inculcating reading and
reasoning with truth



Nurturing reflective learning

What is your commitment to the rising generation?

“Let us arise and build.” And they put their hands to the good work. (Nehemiah 2:18)



AMO® after school program, Brazil

Resources

Photographs:

1. Food for the Hungry International
2. “Nino Pastor”: PROMPERU photographer, Domingo Giribaldi
3. Elizabeth Youmans, Ethiopia photographs
4. Rubens Cartaxo, AMO® Pilot Project, Parnamirim, Brazil

Books:

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Bunge, M. (Ed.) (2001). *The child in Christian thought*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Slater, R. (1960). *Teaching and learning America’s Christian history: The principle approach*. San Francisco, CA: Foundation for American Christian Education.

Youmans, E., Thrift, J., & Allen, S. (2012). *As the family goes, so goes the nation*. Orlando, FL: Chrysalis International.

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