



Birthday Blessing:

One of the biggest memories of our children is their 1st birthday. We remember the smushed cake on the face, the tearing of presents, and the belly laughs of a child who knows they're the center of attention. What if we took the time to make this day even more special by extending a birthday blessing for our child? This birthday blessing will be one that you'll share at your child's 1st birthday with friends and family present, so they can truly hear your heart's desire for your child and can partner with you to make sure those dreams become reality.

Kickstarter 1: WHO they are

You've lived with your little bundle of joy for a few months now, and you've begun to see his/her personality, the preferences, the habits, the disposition. You're beginning to see WHO they really are. John and Stasi Eldredge state simply, "Every little boy needs to know he has what it takes. Every little girl needs to know you delight in her." Even though every child has the same basic need, God has uniquely created your child.

Psalm 139:1-14 beautifully illustrates how intrinsically and uniquely made we are:

1 You have searched me, LORD, and you know me.

2 You know when I sit and when I rise; you

perceive my thoughts from afar.

3 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.

4 Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely.

5 You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me.

6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

7 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

8 If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

9 If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,

10 even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

11 If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,"

12 even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

13 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

14 I praise you because I am fearfully and



wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

Take a moment to think about your child. This little one that God has given to you, how has God made him/her unique? List a few characteristics/personality traits you already see in your child. In what ways is he/she fearfully and wonderfully made? Take a moment to define your child's "something special!"

Kickstarter 2-WHO you want them to become

It's so easy as a parent to get caught up in the discipline part of parenting, emphasizing what we want our children to DO and not DO, when instead our focus should be on WHO we want them to be! The difference moves from focusing on performance to character. The basic question we want to ask is not, "What do I want them to do," but, "Who do I want them to become?"

This kickstarter is designed to be a simple think tank, to move through a few questions that will help you figure out/put words to WHO you want your child to become. Go ahead and reread Psalm 139:1-4, then take some time to think through and answer the following questions:

1. What were some character traits you struggled with as a child/teen?
2. Why were those a struggle?
3. What character traits came easy to you growing up?
4. What are the most important character traits I want my child to develop?
5. What makes each character trait you listed important to you?

Kickstarter 3-Choosing to FOCUS

The bottom line is that we can want LOTS of things for our children. During this kickstarter, we want you to narrow your focus. During the 2nd kickstarter you answered a few questions that helped spur your thinking towards WHO you want your child to become. Get that list out and lets process it to narrow the focus.

We need to define the target. If we say we want our child to be honest, loving, considerate, compassionate, humble, a leader, etc. and blah, blah, blah, the target is wide and moving. We want to create an easily identified target so that we know EXACTLY what to aim for. So look at the list from Kickstarter 2 and pick 2 to 3 character traits that are of utmost importance to you to use as your focus for the birthday blessing.

Jeremiah 29:11 says,



“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

God has a specific plan for your child. What’s your plan in raising this gift God has entrusted to you? By picking out two to three characteristics and indicating why those are important, you get your parenting focus. If it’s vital to you that your child is honest, you’ll take lying very seriously. You’ll use the planning guide to help you write out the birthday blessing that will be shared during your child’s first birthday party.

Francis Chan says, *“Our greatest fear should not be of failure, but of succeeding at things in life that don’t really matter.”* What really matters to you when it comes to the character of your child?