

## Quotations about Parenting

*“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.”* - Benjamin Franklin -

*“Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them.”* - James Baldwin -

*“We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future.”* - Franklin D. Roosevelt, *Great Speeches*

*“No man should bring children into the world who is unwilling to persevere to the end in their nature and education.”* - Plato -

## July Birthdays

2 Rhea Hoffman      10 Seth Pena      25 Chuck Limburg  
7 Kim Bruni          14 Sara Pena

(Note: if anyone is “missed” here, let Jim know)

### Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.  
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.  
Sunday.....6:00 p.m.  
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

**Preacher**  
*Carlos Peña*

**Church of Christ**  
81-377 Ave 46  
Indio, CA 92201  
(760) 342-1859

(Address Service Requested)

# Indio Informer

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Being a parent...

## Parenting Verbs

Allen Webster

In Proverbs, Solomon invites us into the intimacy of his family circle. Twenty three times in the book he addresses “my son.” Forty times he mentions mothers and fathers. Five times he mentions a wife (Proverbs 5:18; Proverbs 6:29; Proverbs 18:22; Proverbs 19:13-14) and five additional times he mentions a wise, virtuous, or gracious woman (possibly referring either to his wife or a future daughter-in-law). Let’s allow the world’s wise man to give us the verbs we need to successfully prepare our children for heaven.

### Observe your child.

*“Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right”* (Proverbs 20:11). The American Standard Version has, *“Even a child maketh himself known by his doings.”* The phrase “maketh himself known” implies adult observation. The next verse says, *“The hearing ear and the seeing eye, the Lord has made both of them”* (Proverbs 20:12). Solomon seems to be saying that God gave us senses for a reason—to use them to watch and listen to our children. Some parents keep a notebook in which to assimilate meaningful patterns (interests, intelligence, abilities, social skills) in the child’s conduct. They can then use this information to turn their hearts toward heaven.

### Accept your child.

A parent’s approval is important. Solomon knew he was *“his father’s son”* (Proverbs 4:3), which is another way of saying that he was “Daddy’s boy.” Solomon begins the book by identifying himself as the *“son of David”* (Proverbs 1:1)—not a preacher (as he did in Ecclesiastes), king, wise man, husband, or scientist, although he was each of these and more.

Parents succeed when they create an atmosphere of acceptance and foster a sense of belonging. This goes against the grain with some parents who set high goals for their children and drive them hard to

fulfill those dreams. This is good to a point, but wisdom creates room for falling short and doing better next time. When a child feels he is never good enough for Dad or that she never does well enough to earn Mom's approval, frustration or depression may develop.

We can focus so much on what children are not doing right, that we don't see what they are doing well. One said, "A father needs to be on his child's team—not on his back" (cf. Romans 14:19). JFK's father, Joseph, pushed his sons toward excellence and achievement. He usually found something to criticize if they did not take first place. This ambition was epitomized by his remark: "For the Kennedys, it is the outhouse or the castle—nothing in between." Paul warned, "*Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged*" (Colossians 3:21). Phillips paraphrases Ephesians 6:4: "*Fathers, do not overcorrect your children and make it difficult for them to obey the commandment, but bring them up in Christian doctrine and in Christian discipline.*"

J. Paul Getty was at one time the richest man in the world. But J. Paul Getty, Jr., only saw his father only on special occasions. When he was in high school, Getty Jr. wrote a special letter to his father. The letter came back to him from his father with the grammatical and spelling errors marked in red pencil. There was no personal response from his father. Not one word. Getty Jr. summed up that experience by saying, "I never got over that."

We must not expect an adult head to sit on a child's shoulders. We should remember what it was like to be three, six, and sixteen and give children room to make mistakes, develop, learn, and grow. Perhaps Reader's Digest said it best: "Rearing children is like holding a very wet bar of soap—too firm a grasp and it shoots from your hand, too loose and it slides away. A gentle but firm grasp keeps it in your control."

### **Manage the child.**

Matthew Henry's comment on "*even a child is known by his doings*" is interesting. He wrote, "Parents should observe their children, that they may manage them accordingly." Only important people have managers. Professional athletes have managers; actors have managers; presidents have managers. And children of Christian parents have managers. Children are that important (Matthew 18:3; Matthew 19:13-14).

The psalmist compared children to arrows in the hand of a mighty man: "*As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate*" (Psalm 127:4-5). An arrow needs to be properly aimed and propelled to reach its target. We both aim and propel our children toward heaven. What we reward and encourage gets repeated (humility, sharing, humor, love); what we punish and discourage (lying, pride, aggression, selfishness) is gradually eliminated.

A child with temperamental difficulties needs especially strong, loving management. Such children often turn out to be highly creative, successful, even exceptional people—like Winston Churchill—but they need more management than "easy" children. Mothers, especially, have a powerful influence in aiming and pushing children in the right direction in their tender years. Some think this is the reason that mothers are mentioned in the Old Testament histories of the kings (1 Kings 15:13; 2 Kings 24:12; 2 Chronicles 22:3). It seems that Lois and Eunice were the sole Christian family influences that molded Timothy into such a capable preacher (cf. 2 Timothy 1:5; 2 Timothy 3:14-15).

Learning a child's talents, interests, and abilities will help formulate a plan for how the child can go on to a successful life—secularly and spiritually. Then we can manage them—put before them the people, circumstances, experiences, materials, encouragements, classes, and training to help them succeed.

### **Show your child.**

"*My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways*" (Proverbs 23:26). More is caught than taught. In her autobiography, Linda Ellerbee, then co-anchor of NBC News Overnight, once received this letter from a little girl: "Dear Miss Ellerbee, when I grow up I want to do exactly what you do. Please do it better." What a thought for parents! Little eyes are watching us; little feet are following us; little minds are scrutinizing us. Our character is a river flowing past our children hour by hour. One day our steps likely will be their steps, our thoughts will be their thoughts, and our words will be their words. "*And he walked in all the ways of . . . his father; he turned not aside from it, doing that which was right in the eyes of the Lord*" (1 Kings 22:43).

Verbs are **words of action**.

***"Go, and do thou likewise"***  
(Luke 10:37)