

Introduction – How to best use this Parent Preview at home:

It takes diligence to train our children ‘in’ and ‘of’ the gospel and in good character each day. However, this is your ministry as a parent: “Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it”. And by God’s Grace your child will have true “repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.”

This letter has tips to help you at home as you reinforce the biblical character training that your child is learning in our karate classes.

1. If you invest a few minutes a day and implement some of the ideas in this monthly letter at home you will help your child get SO MUCH MORE out of the time you spend at our school as well as establish patterns for successful behavior as adults.
2. If you do not have interest or time to read this entire newsletter. We encourage you to take a few seconds and just scan through the different topics.
3. Try it for a month! Print out this newsletter, and then each day pick something to discuss and practice with your children. We do it over dinner.

Here is an idea: We have five ‘I wills’, one scripture, and one definition. That is seven things total. What I try to do is take one of those seven things and discuss it, explain it, and catch my child doing it and applying it that day. Or, if they missed an opportunity to apply it I try to show them how they could have used it.

I take very seriously the opportunity you give me by allowing me to partner with you to teach your child the things of God.

So, **I appeal you by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the spirit to strive together with me in your prayers to God on behalf of your child that he or she would bear fruit for God in their lives.** Please pray before and during **every** class your child attends. Pray for God to open his or her eyes, ears, and heart to understand and apply His truth that we will be sharing that day. **Also, please pray for us** that we would be good stewards of the time you have given us with your child and we would be faithful witnesses of our Lord and His word. **Every** class, **every** time, **please join with us in prayer.**

The Power of a Partnership and Consistency

I hope for the chance to expose your child to sound Biblical Character Training **over a long period of time.** And Lord willing, the longer the term of exposure to this curriculum the **BIGGER** the impact will be on your child and his or her growing in Christ-likeness and being a means by which God displays His Glory.

And your child will be exposed to this character building curriculum everyday you visit our school!

Enjoy the Parent preview below:

Character training has no impact unless it is a part of everyday life. Biblical character training is only a short term band-aid with no long lasting effects and so powerless and ‘NOT BIBLICAL’ without God’s enabling by His Holy Spirit.

I encourage you to ask God every day for His Spirit to inwardly restrain, enlighten, correct, purify and guide your child and give you the grace to teach and to speak truth into your child's life in an appropriate way and time.

JOYFULNESS vs. SELF-PITY Parent Preview

Definition:

JOYFULNESS is maintaining a good attitude, even when faced with unpleasant conditions.

Tiny Tiger Definition: JOYFULNESS is always having a good attitude.

Other definitions or quotes:

- JOYFULNESS is THE BRIGHT SPIRIT AND RADIANT COUNTENANCE THAT COME BY BEING IN FULL FELLOWSHIP WITH THE LORD.
- Joy is proof to the world that God can fully satisfy the human heart.
 - o “You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” (Ps 16:11 ESV)
- Joy is the component that, when added to a trial, provides the strength to endure it.
 - o “And do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.” (Neh 8:10)
- “Joy is not the absence of trouble, but the presence of Christ.” – William Vander Hoven
- Joyfulness is dedication to a purpose that gives meaning to suffering and purpose to living.

Application for Home and Life Skills Development:

WHY TEACH JOYFULNESS? Centuries of human experience have shown that material things alone cannot produce joy. Joy is not a result of external circumstances. Joy is the quality of one whose purpose in life eclipses the trials of the moment. Attitudes are just as contagious as disease.

- 1. I will look for good in all things.**
- 2. I will smile at adversity.**
- 3. I will not give in to discouragement.**
- 4. I will not allow my emotions to rule my mind.**
- 5. I will take time out of every day to laugh and to sing.**

Scripture Memory for class:

“Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds” James 1:2 (ESV)

Three types of smiles

1. **Obedient Smile** – Fulfilling the command to rejoice in all things, regardless of how I feel.
2. **Ministry Smile** – Desiring to encourage the ones who have to look at my face.
3. **Joyful Smile** – Expressing with my soul the joy of my spirit because of the work of God in my life.

The Steps to Experience Joy

- 1. GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD**
 - a. All things come from the hand of God

- i. And he said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.” (Job 1:21)
 - b. Everything that happens to us is ultimately for our good
 - i. “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.” (Rom 8:28)
 - c. Every circumstance can build character in us
 - i. “For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.” (Rom 8:29)
 - d. Difficulties and afflictions can teach us God’s ways
 - i. “It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes.” (Ps 119:71)
2. **CALL UPON HIS NAME**
 - a. “Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known.” Jer 33:3
 3. **MAKE KNOWN HIS DEEDS AMONG THE PEOPLE**
 4. **SING UNTO HIM, SING PSALMS UNTO HIM**
 - a. “...be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart” (Eph 5:18-19)
 5. **TALK OF ALL HIS WONDEROUS WORKS**
 6. **GLORY IN HIS HOLY NAME**
 7. **LET YOUR HEART REJOICE THAT SEEK THE LORD**
 - a. For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor. No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly.” (Ps 84:11)
 8. **SEEK THE LORD AND ALL HIS STRENGTH**
 - a. “And do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.” (Neh 8:10)
 9. **SEEK HIS FACE CONTINUALLY**
 - a. May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, *Selah* that your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations.” (Ps 67:1-2)

PRAISE CHILDREN:

Praise is genuine when it is expressed in a spirit of gratitude.

- **False Praise:** given because praising will get me something
- **True Praise:** marked by gratitude for what has already been contributed by someone’s character

Illustrations Used in KK4C Class

Along with teaching and expanding on the above definition, the ‘I Wills’, and scripture, **JOYFULNESS** will be illustrated using:

- **JOYFULNESS in nature with the Otter.** The newborn otter is afraid of water. The otter parents must gradually acquaint their young with the water by leading them near it, splashing in it, and eventually carrying them into a stream or lake. Soon the young otter discovers that the experience they dreaded has become their greatest source of joy and provision. (**No Character Card this Month they did not make one**)
- **Hero’s of Character with Juliette Gordon Low** – Every year the Juliette low statue is awarded to a woman in recognition of her field and community and for the positive example she provides to young women as she – like Juliette – discovers joy in the process.

Personal Evaluation – How JOYFUL are you?

1. Do people see a bright countenance when they look at you?

2. Do you cry out to God whenever you are faced with a difficult decision?
3. Do you cry out to God and experience His working in response to your crying out?
4. Do you joyfully share these experiences with everyone you can?
5. Do you use scripture and the names of God in your prayers?
6. Do you enjoy times of rich, wholehearted fellowship with the Lord?
7. Do you memorize scripture?
8. Do you thank God for every trial you experience?
9. Are you discipling others in their spiritual growth?
10. Do you put your whole heart and mind into the jobs you are given?

JOYFULNESS in the Home Includes:

- Remaining positive even when the family situation is not ideal or things are not going according to plan.
- Smiling and speaking kindly to family members even when they forget to do what was asked of them.
- Finding ways to solve family problems positively.
- Cheerfully praising one another instead of blaming.
- Greeting each other each morning with a cheerful smile.
- Keeping the home bright with uplifting music.

Rewards of JOYFULNESS

STRENGTH – There is a special strength that emanates from a joyful person.

HEALTH – Medical research has confirmed that a joyful smile actually strengthens the immune system, which fights against disease in the body.

Biblical Commentaries on JOYFULNESS

Testing of Your Faith

² Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³ for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴ And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

⁹ Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, ¹⁰ and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. ¹¹ For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.

¹² Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

Endure trials — they lead to maturity

(1:2–18)

James knows that his Christian brothers and sisters have many troubles. They are tempted and persecuted. But James urges them to welcome their trials joyfully, as tests which will strengthen them. If they treat these attacks as spiritual exercises, they will grow strong and become fully fit in their faith.

James teaches that the Christian way to become wise is to ask God. This is very different from the idea of gaining knowledge through myths and secrets. God gives to anyone who asks — and he does so generously and immediately.

¹ *The Holy Bible : English standard version*. 2001 (Jas 1:2-12). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

But James urges his readers to ask with firm faith, and not be tossed around by doubt and disbelief.²

From Trouble to Triumph

To test the genuineness of a diamond, jewelers often place it in clear water, which causes a real diamond to sparkle with special brilliance. An imitation stone, on the other hand, will have almost no sparkle at all. When the two are placed side by side, even an untrained eye can easily tell the difference.

In a similar way, even the world can often notice the marked differences between genuine Christians and those who merely profess faith in Christ. As with jewels, there is a noticeable difference in radiance, especially when people are undergoing difficult times. Many people have great confidence in their faith until it is severely tested by hardships and disappointments. How a person handles trouble will reveal whether his faith is living or dead, genuine or imitation, saving or nonsaving.

In the parable of the sower, Jesus explained that “those [seeds that fell] on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation [testing] fall away,” and that “the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance” (Luke 8:13, 15).

Everyone who lives in this world endures some measure of trouble. That is the consequence of the Fall, the natural result of sinful human nature and of a world and society corrupted by iniquity.

God’s own children are not exempt from trouble, and there will be trouble related even to the best of things that He gives us. In marriage and family life (the best gift He has given for earthly happiness), trouble is inevitable (1 Cor. 7:28). Jesus assured His disciples that “in the world you have tribulation” (John 16:33). Though sinless Himself, He was deeply troubled and wept when He saw Mary and the friends of her brother Lazarus grieving over his death (John 11:33). He grieved because of Judas’s betrayal (John 13:21), and was “deeply grieved, to the point of death” over the prospect of taking the sin of the world upon Himself (Matt. 26:38; cf. John 12:27). Paul testified that he was “afflicted in every way” (2 Cor. 4:8); and to varying degrees and for various reasons, that is the experience of everyone. We expect occasional trouble in our job, in school, in society, even in our family and in our church. We know that we cannot escape criticism, frustration, disappointment, physical pain, emotional pain, disease, injury, and eventually death.

Christians also can expect trouble *because of* their faith. Jesus said, “If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you” (John 15:20). Paul reminded Timothy that “indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Tim. 3:12).

James’s major emphasis in this present text, and in the entire letter, is that if a person’s faith is genuine, it will prove itself during times of trouble, whatever the nature or source of the trouble may be. For that reason, this epistle is valuable for unbelievers as well as believers. That is especially true for unbelievers who consider themselves to be Christians and need to recognize that faith that is reliable only when things are going well is not saving faith and is worth nothing. It is, in fact, worth *less* than nothing, because it deceives those who trust in it. Not only will it fail them when they need help the most but, immeasurably worse, it will lead them to think they are headed for heaven when, in reality, they are headed for hell.

James shows that when faith is but an empty profession or mere sentiment not based on firm and intelligent convictions of divine truth, the fire of trouble will burn it up. But where there is true faith, affliction naturally leads to deeper thought on one’s true condition than under other circumstances and thereby frees the heart from deception and self-righteousness. The source of weakness leads to earnest wrestling with God in prayer; and the experience of the sustaining grace thus obtained strengthens and exhilarates hope.

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²Knowles, A. (2001). *The Bible guide*. Includes index. (1st Augsburg books ed.) (672). Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg.

³MacArthur, J. (1998). *James* (15). Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press.

Character First! Bulletin Series 2 / No. 18

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