

From the Family Room

**Creekwood Church of Christ
Mobile, AL**

25 June, 2017

THE FOUR SEASONS OF GROWTH FOR CHILDREN

“Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one, the only God! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and mind and with all your soul and with all your strength, with your entire being. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be written on your heart and mind. You shall teach them diligently to your children impressing God’s precepts on their minds and penetrating their hearts with His truths and shall speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up. And you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be used as bands on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. Deuteronomy 6:4-9

We all want our children to grow and mature spiritually, physically, emotionally, and mentally. But that process is not simple and linear. Humans develop in different ways in different seasons of their life. **Tim Elmore** recently noted in his daily e-mail, **Growing Leaders, June 13, 2017**, that our children learn from their environment in three different ways – OBSERVATION – CONVERSATION – PARTICIPATION. And this learning happens every day in everyday life events. We must be sensitive to this learning process as we interact socially within the family and outside of the family. We must be aware that little eyes are watching alertly and little ears are listening attentively to every word.

Elmore also referenced the work of Dr. Rick and Kathy Hicks in which they detailed four stages of how young people adopt their paradigm of life and their values. Elmore listed the following table of the seasons of a child’s life.

Ages 1-7	Ages 8-13	Ages 14-20	Ages 21 and Up
<i>Imprint by Observation</i>	<i>Modeling by Heroes</i>	<i>Socialization by Peers</i>	<i>Significant Emotional Events</i>
<i>Kids pattern after adults</i>	<i>Kids choose who they’ll emulate</i>	<i>Kids change via key relationships</i>	<i>Experiences challenge them to change</i>
<i>Whatever Mom does is right</i>	<i>Whatever my heroes do is right</i>	<i>Whatever my peers do is right.</i>	<i>The young person learns as an adult.</i>

This is all good, but Moses was inspired by God to write similar information thousands of years ago in Deuteronomy 6:4-9. We as parents and grandparents must first love God with our entire being. God’s commandments and promises should be an integral part of the parents. When God’s words direct our attitudes and actions, our children and grandchildren will learn the proper way to live by their observation of our lives, by listening and talking to us about everyday things, and by helping us in the duties of life. We will be teaching God’s word diligently to our young people in the ways they can best learn.

Let’s be aware of how our young people learn best according to their age. Let’s take advantage of our opportunities to teach this week. Let us teach God and His will to our young people by our actions and with our words

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