

# Grace Based Blueprint

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**W**e have a fixed amount of time to prepare our kids for the future. This seems like all the time in the world when we bring them home from the hospital. When we are holding our newborn in our arms, we think about what they are about to become—great athletes, super talented, looked up to by all the kids in their class and graduating magna cum-whatever—and that’s just kindergarten! The problem is these little “18 year wake up calls” have a mind of their own, a personality of their own and a deep-seated sin nature that can thwart all of our best laid plans and intentions. None of us know very well what we’re doing when we get into this thing called parenting. Our culture doesn’t give us a lot of guidance either.

Although we describe the Grace Based Blueprint through the lens of parenting, this is a blueprint for all relationships. We want to treat everyone in our life the way God treats us, with grace. Be sure to check out our marriage, grand parenting, and church resources to see how grace transforms every relationship.

If we want our kids to turn out right and be aimed at a life of true greatness by the time they leave our nest, it is going to take a game plan—a well thought out strategy. We need a philosophy of parenting that focuses on the heart of our child, their inner core or being and keeps the end result in mind. We believe there’s a biblical philosophy of parenting that’s written throughout the pages of Scripture and can be seen in the way that God deals with us—through Grace.

The Grace Based Parenting model does just that. Just as you build a house from the ground up, you build your child up. It starts with a firm foundation that is rooted in a solid relationship with Jesus Christ and is aimed at raising our children for a future of True Greatness.

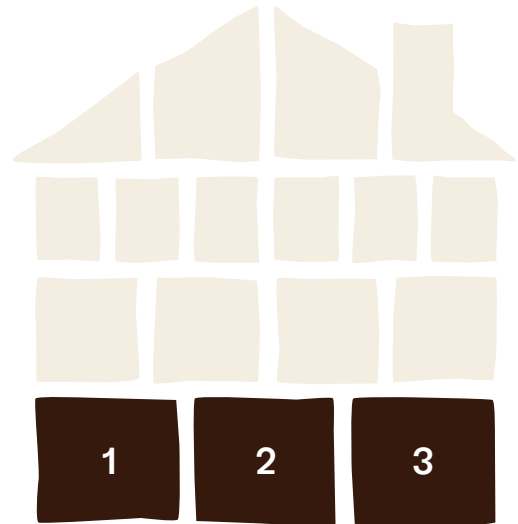
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## PART ONE

# Three Inner Needs

All people, regardless of the natural diversity that exists among the vast cultures of the world, share the same three basic inner needs. Everyone feels the need to be securely loved, to feel their life has a significant purpose and that they have a strong hope for the future. Recognizing and understanding these three inner needs are essential to good parenting and also to being better family members, spouses, co-workers and friends.



While we may not always be dialed-in on meeting our kids' needs for security, significance and strength, there's one person who is always working overtime to satisfy these needs...His name is Satan. He wants nothing more than to see these heart needs met with superficial, insufficient solutions that leave our kids vulnerable to his attacks. That's why it's vital that we harness the power of God's grace to meet these longings with love, purpose and hope.

### 1. A Secure Love

God purposely put a void in us that needs to be filled with love so that we might see our need for Him. Every child needs to know that they are loved totally and unconditionally. They need to know that our love is fully given and that it can't be earned or lost. When they know they are loved, they will feel secure.

### 2. A Significant Purpose

Everyone wants their life to count for something. Our sense of significance comes from knowing that what we are doing on a daily basis has a lasting and positive impact on the world. As parents, we must show our kids that they serve an important purpose in our family, their school, their church and the community.

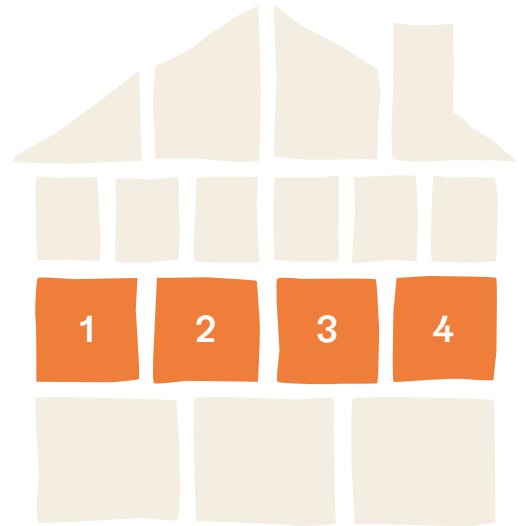
### 3. A Strong Hope

Hope is the magic ingredient that helps you persevere and gives you that extra dose of courage when you need it. How much more so with our eternal hope in Jesus? Teaching our children about this eternal hope, through our words and actions, arms our kids with one of the greatest weapons against despair.

## PART TWO

# Four Freedoms

Meeting our child's 3 Inner Needs is only possible within an atmosphere of grace. As the metaphor suggests, the atmosphere of a home, just like the atmosphere of a room or of a planet, impacts what happens within it. If our home's atmosphere is defined by fear, it's going to be difficult for our kids to have a sense of security or a strong hope for the future. If our home's atmosphere is one defined by pleasing others rather than pleasing God, our kids get the sense that they are trying to earn our favor and the favor of others rather than resting securely in the unconditional love of Christ and finding their significance in serving Him.



Grace is the atmosphere within which our efforts to meet our kids three inner needs will flourish. Creating an atmosphere of grace means giving our kids four freedoms.

### **1. Freedom to Be Different**

Allowing our kids to be weird, quirky, strange, and unique. It's often those things that our kids do that most annoy and inconvenience us that are the primary ingredients in their God-given uniqueness.

### **2. Freedom to be Vulnerable**

Our kids need to know that we are always a safe place where they can come with their fears, concerns, hurts and insecurities and that we will never assess those things against our love and favor for them.

### **3. Freedom to be Candid**

Our kids need to know that they can be honest with us without it costing them in our relationship. Sometimes they will need to be candid with us about things that we have done that have hurt, angered or annoyed them. They also need to be able to share struggles that they are going through or areas in which they have failed. We need to be prepared to eat a lot of crow and ask forgiveness.

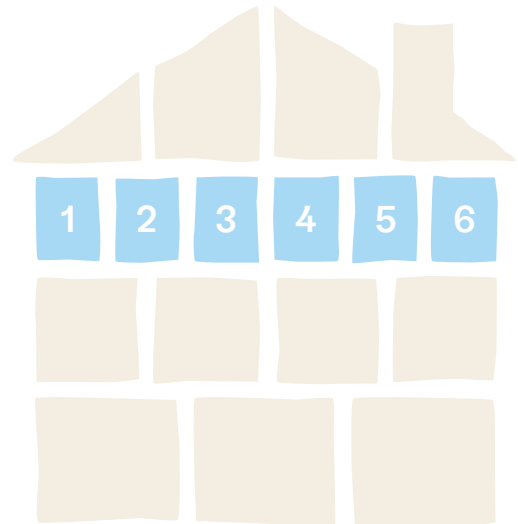
### **4. Freedom to Make Mistakes**

It's not a question of if our kids will make mistakes, its when and how big. They need to know that nothing can separate them from God's love or ours, and that home is a proving ground where mistakes, even big ones, never mean the end of a relationship.



## PART THREE

# Building Character



You've always heard that it's what's on the inside that counts...and it's TRUE! Good character is what compensates for weaknesses, redeems brokenness, and increases potential. Many of the parenting tools and advice available today focus completely on behavior modification. Unfortunately, this only addresses the surface of the problem and not the cause. Grace Based Parents build character into their children from the inside out. When we focus on the heart, the behavior will follow. Most parents want their child to go through childhood right. Grace Based Parents want children who turn out right.

Building character into our children sets them up to be better siblings, more responsible students. It also prepares them to be better spouses and parents. It paves the way for them to become believers who rely upon God's power to live out their faith.

### 1. Faith

Faith becomes a character trait when what we believe starts making moral choices for us. *"Being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we cannot see"* (Hebrews 11:11)

### 2. Integrity

What you are when no one is looking. Integrity is the moral clarity we depend on to do the right thing even when life is holding a gun to our head or when no one would know otherwise.

### 3. Poise

A keen sense of the appropriate. Poise is that moral and relational equilibrium that keeps people balanced, practical, and relevant. God's gracious presence in a person's life helps him or her know when it's time to plant or uproot, tear down or build, weep or laugh, mourn or dance, embrace or refrain, search or give up, keep or throw away, be silent or speak up, love or hate, go to war or make peace. (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8; 7:16-18)

### 4. Discipline

Forgoing the immediate to guarantee the ultimate. It's saying "no" now so you can say "yes" later. Like the rails beneath a train, the disciplines we build into a young person's life enables him or her to harness all the many potentials God has built into that child. Train tracks confine a train, but in so doing, empower it to do an enormous amount of good for people and the marketplace. A train that



leaves its rails is called a “train wreck.” Train wrecks are a mess. So are the lives of people who don’t have disciplines built into the core of their character. Grace based parents and churches love kids enough to do the hard work of building tracks for their potential.

### **5. Endurance**

The ability to keep going when everything is telling you to give up. The world is full of quitters. This gracious character trait trains young people to keep going when everyone else would have long given up. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)

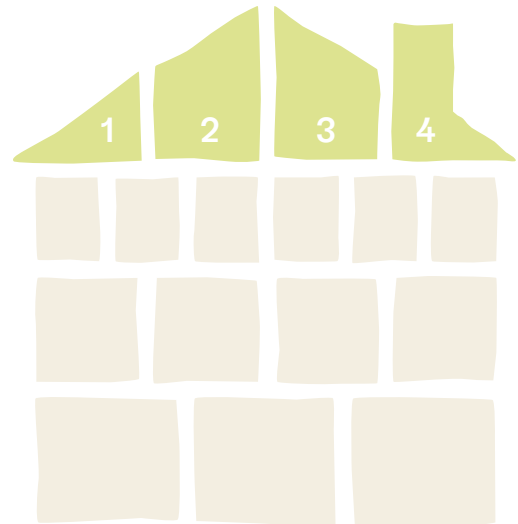
### **6. Courage**

The resolve to do what you ought to do in any given situation. If disciplines are what we put around our children’s strengths in order to harness them, courage is what we wrap around our kid’s weaknesses and fears in order to help them move beyond them. Just as God’s grace courageously drove Jesus to center stage of time and space to pay the price for our sins on the cross, it can also empower His children to face the giants in their life.

## PART FOUR

# Aiming for True Greatness

The world measures success by four simple metrics: wealth, beauty, power and fame. You don't have to read very far into the pages of the Bible to realize that, more often than not, God uses weak, broken, unknown and undesirable people to do His best work.



If we aim our children at the world's view of success we are definitely aiming low because God has something much better in mind. Why just be successful when you can be Truly Great? True Greatness is a passionate love for God that demonstrates itself in an unquenchable love and concern for others. God has amazing plans for us and our kids that we often miss because we are lured into and focus on earthly success. Helping our kids reach their full spiritual potential means we as parents need to model four heart traits.

### 1. A Humble Heart

A reverence for God and a respect for others. *“Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”* (Philippians 2:3,4 ESV)

### 2. A Grateful Heart

An appreciation for what you have and Who has given it. *“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”* (1 Thessalonians 5:18 ESV)

### 3. A Generous Heart

A great delight in sharing with others what God has entrusted to you. *“Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”* (Luke 6:38 ESV)

### 4. A Servant's Heart

A willingness to take action in order to help someone else. *“And the King will answer them, “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.””* (Matthew 25:40 ESV)



**Gracebased exists to help set families free by educating, equipping, and encouraging them at every age and stage of life.**

We work to bring life to couples, rest to parents, purpose to grandparents, and help to churches through books, conferences, video studies, and podcasts. Grace sets relationships free and Gracebased is committed to coming alongside families in their journey to experience the life God has for them.

To learn more, visit

[www.gracebased.com](http://www.gracebased.com)



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