

The
Values-Driven
Family

Fourth Edition

Marc & Cynthia Carrier



Values Driven®

The Values-Driven Family: Fourth Edition" by Marc and Cynthia Carrier

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Preface

The Values-Driven Family: A Proactive Plan for Successful Biblical Parenting was originally published in 2006. At that time, we had just had our fifth child. In our parenting journey up to that point, we had read many books—maybe too many, because integrating the process of parenting with daily living had become a bit confusing and even seemed overwhelming at times.

In order to sort it all out, we needed to get back to the foundation of God’s Word, something that was all too easy to lose sight of when immersed in many ideas—even those from “Christian” books. Marc undertook a thorough cover-to-cover study of the Scriptures and we began to see more and more not just what God wanted us to “do” as parents, but how He wanted us (and our children) to *be*. Essentially, we affirmed that our goal is to maintain close relationships with each other as we also grow in fellowship with God and allow the Holy Spirit to help us mature in Christ-like character.

Granted, the goal seems a bit broad and there are many ways of accomplishing it; however, we’ve learned a lot along the way that has been of practical help as God has worked in the spiritual realm. What we have tried to do for you, our fellow sojourners, is to put the pieces of the parenting puzzle together into a comprehensive package, so that you can see not only the “big picture” of where you’re going, but also successfully meet the smaller challenges of every day.

This fourth edition of *The Values-Driven Family* reflects some of the changes that we have gone through spiritually and personally as our parenting journey has progressed. Our goal has grown beyond just equipping you as a parent; we also have a passion to encourage you in your primary role as a Kingdom saint. Parenting is just one small piece of a very big puzzle.

We hope that you and your family will be greatly blessed along your journey together, as you strive to glorify God in all things. Thank you for allowing us to be a part of this process!

Blessings,

Marc and Cindy Carrier
June 2013

Chapter 1: Begin at the Beginning

Perhaps your journey began like ours: you jumped into parenting with both feet, wanting sincerely to do it just right. You had a keen sense of your responsibility to equip your children with what they would need to succeed in the world, but also desired to raise them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

In our pursuit of that goal, we often found ourselves inadvertently focused on worldly things. Income needed to be generated to meet the needs of the household; the practicalities of child-rearing also demanded a great investment of time. Home management seemed never-ending as the family grew. Home schooling added another set of demands to an already busy life. There came a point where we wondered if we were “doing” enough for the Lord. We felt distracted from what we knew should be our primary objective: serving and glorifying God.

Slowly but surely, we began to realize that we needed to focus less on the things of the world and more on the things of the Kingdom. Understanding what that means for us has been a great adventure and a work of God’s amazing grace.

It’s impossible to know where to begin in describing the radical transformation that took place in our lives when we realized that it really wasn’t just about us and our family and our narrow-minded understanding of God and His desires for our lives. There came a point where we had to look honestly and without bias at the Scriptures, and we were challenged by what we found. Jesus said that His Kingdom is not of this world; the Bible tells us that our citizenship is in heaven and we are merely sojourners here. Yet we were essentially behaving as if our faith were somewhat of an accessory—something of convenience and for our blessing, rather than a call to obedience and holiness.

Jesus said, narrow is the way that leads to eternal life and few find it; yet there are many who profess faith in Jesus Christ. We had to ask ourselves, can we look like the world and behave like the world, yet claim our citizenship is in heaven? For that matter, was it even enough to look “better” than those who were in the church? Who were we really serving—God and His Kingdom or ourselves and our own dreams and desires? These were sobering questions and God has been very gracious to us in this discovery process.

Although this is a book that covers the fundamentals of parenting—which are assuredly of necessity in raising our children for Christ—we, as parents must *begin at the beginning*. We urge you to do as we did: study the Scriptures, particularly the teachings of Jesus. Consider how you “measure up,” not to the expectations of the world or your church denomination, but to the character and commands of Jesus. Focus on the Sermon on the Mount in particular. Evaluate the fruit in your life; not the programs you participate in or the number of times you go to church or the things that you “do” to serve

God and others, but rather the fruit of the Spirit that is evident in your character. Are you living a radically transformed life that glorifies the God who has purchased your freedom from the power of sin in your life?

If you feel there is a discrepancy between your profession of faith and the evidence of your faith, seek the Lord, study the Scriptures (you may want to begin with the verses listed in Appendix One), and begin a discovery journey of your own. We recommend that you read *The Kingdom Expansion Series* (particularly *The Gospel According to Jesus* and *Keys to Kingdom Expansion*, which are available as free ebooks on our Web site, www.ValuesDrivenFamily.com) in order to understand your part in God's Kingdom and catch the vision for living for His glory. Many women have found *Home Sweet Home: Creating a Joyful Home Atmosphere* of help in the growth process as well. We welcome you to contact us through our Web site if there is any way that we can assist you.