

## CORE TRAINING SERIES



# DEVELOPING A VISION ORIENTATION OF MINISTRY TO CHILDREN & YOUTH

### MINISTRY ROLE:

Pastors, Children/Youth Ministry Leaders, Teachers, Parents

### TARGET AGE:

Infant to Youth Classrooms

# DEVELOPING A VISION ORIENTATION OF MINISTRY TO CHILDREN & YOUTH

by Jill Nelson



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**TARGET AGE:**  
Infants to Youth  
Classrooms

We believe that having a long-term *vision* is crucial for discipling children and youth. A vision-orientation considers where *you are going*—clarifying your goals—and then carefully develops and implements an intentional plan to pursue those goals. Parents, pastors, ministry leaders, and all who care about the faith of the next generation must have a clear target in view so we know where to aim when we are interacting with our children and youth.

Most importantly, our vision must be defined by the biblical vision for the next generation. There are several places in the Bible where God reveals His vision for the next generation. The first seven verses of Psalm 78 have helped to provide a biblical framework for Truth78.

*Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth!*

*<sup>2</sup>I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old,*

*<sup>3</sup>things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us.*

*<sup>4</sup>We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.*

*<sup>5</sup>He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children,*

*<sup>6</sup>that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children,*

*<sup>7</sup>so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments;*

PSALM 78:1-7

Using these verses, and many more, we can begin to see an end goal for our children and youth, something to carefully aim them toward. This helps to clarify the vision, which, in light of New Testament, can be summarized as:

**We are called to faithfully teach the next generations the Word of God so that they might...**

- **know the truth of God and His glorious Gospel.**
- **always honor and love God—never forgetting what He has accomplished in Christ.**
- **set their full confidence in Christ alone for the forgiveness of sin and the fulfillment of all His promises, including eternal life.**
- **follow and obey Jesus as Lord.**
- **live for the glory of God.**

At Truth78, we state this succinctly in our vision statement.

**Our vision is that the next generations know, honor, and treasure God, setting their hope in Christ alone, so that they will live as faithful disciples for the glory of God.**

By having a long-term vision, you can more effectively develop a discipleship strategy—for both church and home—to evaluate every program, activity, curricula, and resource. The vision focuses on questions about our children five, 20, and even 40 years into the future, questions like:

- *What do we want them to understand about God and His Word?*

- *What do they need to know and embrace about Jesus and the Gospel?*
- *What marks of faith and spiritual maturity do we want them to have?*
- *What portions of God's Word do we want hidden in their hearts through memorization?*
- *What kind of husband and father, or wife and mother do we want them to be?*
- *How do we want them to respond to success? To tragedy and suffering?*
- *How does the Bible characterize a true disciple?*

A vision-orientation recognizes that occupying children and youth with various activities and programs is important, but these activities and programs should be shaped by a **long-term, overarching, intentional, strategic plan** for...

- imparting the whole counsel of the Word of God
- presenting the Gospel
- nurturing their faith
- and making true disciples

## GETTING STARTED

To better understand and implement a vision-oriented approach to ministering to children and youth, we encourage you to watch these four short videos by Pastor David Michael and Sally Michael.

1. A Vision for the Discipleship of the Next Generation
2. A Vision for God-Centered, Gospel-Focused Teaching for the Next Generations
3. A Vision for Teaching the Word of God
4. A Vision for Encouraging Faith in Christ

View at: [Truth78.org/foundations-for-ministry](https://truth78.org/foundations-for-ministry)

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Does your church have a long-term, strategic plan for the faith of the next generations? Has it been clearly communicated and explained to parents, ministry leaders, volunteers, and the church as a whole?

Do your current children's and youth programs, curricula, activities, and events reflect a biblical vision for the next generations? Does your church have a means of evaluating the various programs and resources in terms of the greater vision?

What would you say is the greatest strength of your church's ministry to children and youth? What is the greatest weakness? How would you address each in terms of a long-term biblical vision?

As parents, what do you see as your responsibility for nurturing the faith of your children? Are your ultimate goals for your children shaped by a biblical vision for them? What have you found most helpful in discipling your children? What have you found to be a hindrance, if any?

## NEXT STEPS

We invite you to learn more about Truth78 and our vision-oriented resources:

- Truth78 Viewbook  
[Truth78.org/viewbook](https://truth78.org/viewbook)
- Partnering with Parents (for church leaders and teachers)  
[Truth78.org/partnering-with-parents](https://truth78.org/partnering-with-parents)
- Partnering with Your Church (for parents)  
[Truth78.org/partnering-with-your-church](https://truth78.org/partnering-with-your-church)

## FURTHER TRAINING

Visit [Truth78.org/training](https://truth78.org/training) to read other articles in the Core Training Series and browse conference sessions.



Equipping the Next Generations  
to Know, Honor, and Treasure God

Truth78 is a vision-oriented ministry for the next generations—that they may know, honor, and treasure God, setting their hope in Christ alone, so that they will live as faithful disciples for the glory of God.

Our mission is to nurture the faith of the next generations by equipping the church and home with resources and training that instruct the mind, engage the heart, and influence the will through proclaiming the whole counsel of God.

We are committed to developing resources and training that are God-centered, Bible-saturated, Gospel-focused, Christ-exalting, Spirit-dependent, doctrinally grounded, and discipleship-oriented.

## RESOURCES AND TRAINING MATERIALS

Truth78 currently offers the following categories of resources and training materials:

### VISION-CASTING AND TRAINING

We offer a wide variety of booklets, video and audio seminars, articles, and other practical training resources that highlight and further expound our vision, mission, and values, as well as our educational philosophy and methodology. Many of these resources are freely distributed through our website. These resources and trainings serve to assist ministry leaders, volunteers, and parents in implementing Truth78's vision and mission in their churches and homes.

### CURRICULUM

We publish materials designed for formal Bible instruction. The scope and sequence of these materials reflects our commitment to teach children and youth the whole counsel of God over the course of their education. Materials include curricula for Sunday School, Midweek Bible programs, Backyard Bible Clubs or Vacation Bible School, and Intergenerational studies. Most of these materials can be adapted for use in Christian schools and education in the home.

### PARENTING AND FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

We have produced a variety of materials and training resources designed to help parents disciple their children. These include booklets, video presentations, family devotionals, children's books, articles, and other recommended resources.

Furthermore, our curricula include Growing in Faith Together (GIFT) Pages to help parents apply what is taught in the classroom to their child's daily experience in order to nurture faith.

### BIBLE MEMORY

Our Fighter Verses Bible memory program is designed to encourage churches, families, and individuals in the lifelong practice and love of Bible memory. The Fighter Verses program utilizes an easy-to-use Bible memory system with carefully chosen verses to help fight the fight of faith. For pre-readers, Foundation Verses features 76 key verses with simple images. Visit [FighterVerses.com](http://FighterVerses.com) for weekly devotionals and free memory aids. Download the Fighter Verses App for quizzes, songs, devotionals, review reminders and other helps.

For more information on any of these resources and training materials contact:

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