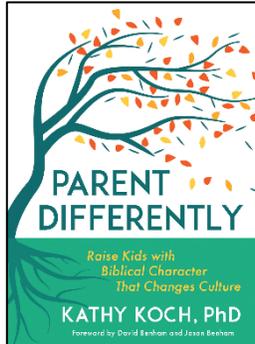


PARENT DIFFERENTLY

Raise Kids with Biblical Character that Changes Culture



Chicago, IL: It matters that children build good character. Their character reflects their convictions, establishes their reputation, and ultimately determines their destiny. Teaching children what biblical character looks like and how to make the right choices can also positively influence the people and culture around them and augment feelings of contentment and success.

KATHY KOCH, PhD, (pronounced “cook”) is the founder and president of Celebrate Kids, Inc., and a child development specialist. She is also the author of seven bestselling parent-child enrichment books. In her latest book, ***PARENT DIFFERENTLY: RAISE KIDS WITH BIBLICAL CHARACTER THAT CHANGES CULTURE*** (Moody Publishers), Dr.

Kathy reminds parents that if they want to see their children adopt positive attitudes, act righteously, and develop healthy habits, then they must lead by example in understanding and demonstrating biblical character.

Dr. Kathy offers practical, relatable, and spiritual-centered insights and strategies for parents and educators, instructing them on how to guide children to develop biblical character so they flourish in life. She further encourages readers that there is “no shame or blame for yesterday and great hope for tomorrow.” Topics featured include:

- **The Importance of Biblical Character:** Character marks us, and a biblical character marks us and children in the very best way. It’s more complete than a Christlike character. It depends on many things, including having a personal relationship with Christ, following the leading of the Holy Spirit, and depending on all God provides, including strength and wisdom. How parents relate to God and church are very important to children wanting a biblical character.
- **The Connection between Character and Obedience:** Teaching character allows children to develop healthy character and a heart for obedience based on right beliefs. Emphasizing obedience doesn’t always work and can actually negatively affect character. If children are obedient, it may be because they’re following rules to earn rewards and avoid punishment. Training character allows children to be obedient because they know who they are and what they’re capable of.
- **The Influence of a Biblical Worldview:** A biblical worldview helps children navigate life with God’s truth, love, and leadership. They must understand that character is a choice, and choices are rooted in their beliefs about people and how the world works. Therefore, we can change children’s character when teaching them biblical beliefs.
- **Essential Foundational Beliefs:** Parents and children need to believe certain things. For example, it’s important that children know they can rely on strength from God, motivation from Jesus, and empowerment of the Holy Spirit to be well and do well even when no one is looking. Parents’ personal beliefs about children influence their children’s attitudes, character, and behavior, so it is essential that parents remember how Jesus loved, valued, and cherished children.
- **Strategies for Teaching & Improving Character:** Teaching biblical character is a process that begins with a transformation of the heart and a pursuit of godly truths. Parents can prioritize children’s spiritual development through prayer, Bible study, church involvement, and worship. We can all help children discern the value of biblical character and why and how to live it out and reinforce them through conversations, questions, and leading by example.

Through *PARENT DIFFERENTLY*, Dr. Kathy hopes not only to provide parents and caregivers a foundation for understanding, shaping, and nurturing children's character but also the desire to celebrate their unique, God-given qualities so they will change culture now and in the future.



DR. KATHY KOCH (pronounced “Cook”), is the founder and president of Celebrate Kids, Inc., based in Fort Worth, Texas. She has influenced thousands of parents, teachers, and children in thirty countries through keynote messages, seminars, chapels, banquet talks, and other events. She has authored seven books, including *Screens and Teens*, *8 Great Smarts*, *Start with the Heart*, *Five to Thrive*, and *Resilient Kids*.

Dr. Kathy earned a PhD in reading and educational psychology from Purdue University. In addition to teaching and coaching, she served as a tenured associate professor of education at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay.

Visit her website at celebratekids.com and find her on Facebook and Instagram @CelebrateKidsInc.

Suggested Interview Questions

- 1) Dr. Kathy, what prompted you to write a book about children and biblical character?
- 2) Is it ever too early or too late to teach biblical character qualities? How does parents' character influence children's character? Are there specific applications to biblical character we need to especially consider?
- 3) You write that there are ways to determine if children's character is mature? What should we look for? Are some character qualities more important than others?
- 4) How are children's beliefs connected to their character choices? How is character connected to family values?
- 5) How can parents better understand what determines their children's choices? How can parents ensure their children feel safe to ask for help with decision-making?
- 6) You write that character traits are connected and that understanding this is a key to teaching character. Can you explain this?
- 7) When identifying positive character traits to develop in our children, why is it important to also identify and talk about their negative traits?
- 8) In what ways do positive and negative consequences build biblical character in children?
- 9) What did Jesus believe about children, and why is it important for children and parents to understand this?
- 10) Where can we find out more information about you and Celebrate Kids?

Notable Quotes from *Parent Differently*

Character is pervasive, controlling, and leading. This is true whether character is healthy or unhealthy. Character marks us because it forms the foundation of all decisions, choices, attitudes, and actions. With a positive character, children are more likely to become who God created them to be. They're more likely to be blessed, successful, confident, and grow in wisdom and healthy relationships. And, of course, if they're Christ followers, it will be easier for them to display the character of Christ. (p. 32, 34).

Parenting differently and teaching individual character traits and how they're connected increases obedience. Although obedience doesn't guarantee a well-developed character, since obedient children may just be following rules, mature character leads to obedience. It's a richer obedience because it's more heart-centered than rule-based. Children who are taught character traits will know why and how to be obedient. When you also motivate and inspire them, they'll want to be good and they'll know how! Character especially helps children become more obedient when you're alert to how they misbehave and you teach related qualities that will help them change. (p. 61)

Because your worldview is your filter for what matters, it's critical to your life and your children. They may value what you value if you teach them why. And if you have integrity and live your values in front of them, there's a greater likelihood they'll adopt them as their own. If they see that your filter doesn't work, they won't be interested. Beliefs, behavior, character, choices, decisions, thoughts, and feelings are birthed here, so be careful! Pay attention to your experiences and the experiences your children have because they will influence their worldview. (p. 106)

Beliefs about God and His Word are foundational to all of life. This is especially true for adopting and maintaining a biblical worldview and living out biblical character. We don't want children just to be moral or good. We want them to have all that a biblical character offers them: strength from God, motivation from Jesus Christ, the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, and so much more! (p. 116)

Children often don't know why they do what they do. Uncovering their beliefs so you can reinforce them or change them requires you to observe. Look for inconsistencies, changes in attitudes, and behaviors like secrecy that will suggest why they do what they do. Watch for their reactions as you make statements to predict what might be going on. Ask questions and watch eye contact and body language that sometimes shows you what's true. Listen for what they don't say. This can also help you predict what they're thinking about. If you can determine why children do what they do, your interventions will be more successful. (p. 144)

Using the word "choice" helps you teach your children that all behavior starts with choice, and this includes character. Your children choose to be other-centered or self-centered, resilient or fragile, and grateful or entitled. The power of choice is one of the reasons you need to prioritize family values and worldview. When they're rooted in God, there's a better chance that your children will choose biblical character qualities. (p. 152)

When your children don't choose to use a character quality they need, don't focus solely on it. Instead, observe and predict other qualities that are essential in this situation and talk about those. Character leads to choices—and choices have consequences. Modeling and teaching how character influences decision making will be a good use of your time. Every choice is a decision, so become alert to your children's choices and look for what traits they're using. To increase their motivation and teachability, point out how children's character choices make them fulfilled or miserable. (p. 168)