**Spiritual Parenting—Penny at a Time**

*How to Use “Weeks of Pennies” and “Weeks Gone By”*

**The purpose is simple and the activity is easy**

Pass a penny from one jar to another every Sunday as you have a conversation about how God is blessing your child.

**This helps spiritually parent your child**

Spiritual parenting is helping your child grow spiritually through conversations and activities in your home. This helps you be intentional and establishes a weekly practice.

**“Weeks of Pennies” jar and “Weeks Gone By” jar reminds us of the gift of time**

When God brings a child into your life and calls you to be a parent, that child is not actually owned by you. Your child is not your possession and in one sense, not the gift. Rather the gift is the time that you have with your child. You have been entrusted with a wonderful responsibility. You have 936 weeks from birth to their eighteenth birthday. The pennies will remind you of this gift of time and remind your child as well of the gift of time the Lord has given them. You might want to add pennies in the jar so that it will equivalent to the first week in August after your child will graduate high school. That might likely be the time your child is leaving your home. Whatever amount of pennies you begin with, now take out a penny for each week that has passed up to this point. Place those in the “Weeks Gone By” jar.

**One penny reminds us of one week and the grace of God behind it**

Grace! God wants the best for your child this week and every week. How precious your child is to God! He not only created your child, but sent His Son to pay the cost of buying your child from a life separated from Him because of sin. Christ purchased forgiveness for your child and a new life in him. Your child was “not purchased with gold…but with the precious blood of Jesus (1 Peter 1:18-19).” Through the death and resurrection of Jesus the payment is complete and covers every week of your child’s life. As you hold the penny representing a week in your child’s life, you can give thanks for the gift of time, but even more than that. You can be thankful for the grace of God that gives Jesus to your child. Help your child grow in that thankfulness and trust in Jesus as well.

**Create a weekly pattern**

Sunday is often the day of Sabbath for families when they set aside a day to honor God, recount his blessings and rest in His goodness. Perhaps your family might choose Sunday evenings to move the penny from one jar to the other and have a time of conversation and prayer. Perhaps it’s Saturday evening concluding the week. Decide on a time and make it a priority by making it a regular pattern and habit.

**For parents of infants and toddlers it might be spoken this way**

* *Lord, thank you that your grace of Jesus covers our child, a promise you made secure in his/her baptism.*
* *Lord we thank you for the last week with our child. Thank you for this high point we remember.* (Mention it out loud.) *Thank you even for the challenging time or low point and how you will use that.* (Mention it out loud).*”*
* *Lord, thank you that you are working your purposes in the life of our child so that he/she would grow in grace you have given in Jesus and follow Him.*

**For parents of preschoolers and grade schoolers it might be spoken this way**

* *Here’s a penny and it reminds us that a week has gone by. Who gave us the gift of our week? Yes. God did. He gave us so many gifts because He loves us. What’s one of His best gifts? Yes it’s Jesus. Let’s thank Him now for these gifts. Dear God, thank you for our time together. Thank you for being with us. Thank you for Jesus who gave His life for us and is with us every day. Thank you for your promise in baptism that “I am your child.” Thank you for …Amen.*
* *Now let’s think about last week. What is something that happened that you really liked?* (What was a “yea?”) *What is something that happened that you really didn’t like?* (What was a “yuck?”) *I wonder how God can help you follow Jesus when those happen?* (This is a great time to help you child see how God is always interested in helping us develop character even when things don’t go our way. Also it might be a good time to practice forgiveness. Help children learn to admit when wrong, ask forgiveness and plan to try not to repeat it.)
* *Now let’s pray about it.* *Lord, thank you for the “yeas” that happened last week.* (You might let your child mention it.) *Thank you Lord that you are with us even during the “yucks.” Lord, please use these challenges to help us better trust you and follow Jesus. In Jesus’ name. Amen.*

**For parents of teens**

* *I’m interested in hearing more about your world. Here’s the penny, another week gone by. And I am thankful for the grace that God has poured on us this last week. So tell me about your week. What was a high point? What was a low point?*
* *What can I be praying for you about? Where do you need God’s grace to be especially working?* (Let this be a time of discussion and especially listening. Be sure to commend ways that you see God fashioning character in the life of your teen. Be proud of their accomplishments, but more proud yet over their character development.)
* (If possible share the prayer time.) *Lord, we give you thanks for the way you are working. We always thank you for Jesus and his life for us. Thank you for forgiveness and new starts with you every day. This last week we want to thank you for…and we want to pray for…*

**At King of Kings we are praying for the ways you spiritually parent in your home**

May it come about as it says on the personalized tops of your child’s jars.

“Weeks of Pennies” jar:

Weeks Gone By

Blessings Taken…

More like Christ

God is making

“Weeks Gone By” jar:

Count the Weeks

And the Ways

God is Working

Every Day!