



Grace Community Church Philosophy of Children's Ministry

The Children's Ministry of Grace Community Church exists to exalt God's glory through evangelizing our children while encouraging parents and edifying servants. The greatest need children have is to know God, the One, True and Living God, known by His revelation of Himself, the Holy Scriptures. By the faithful teaching and instruction of God's Word, our purpose is to establish them in truth with a strong doctrinal foundation so they will be biblically grounded with a God-centered view of life and the world around them. We want them to come to love the Lord their God with all their heart.

This means that our Children's Ministry will be/have...

distinctively God-centered.

When teaching the Bible to children we must be careful to avoid teaching it in a way that puts man in the center and pushes God to the margins. They must understand the Bible is first and foremost a book about God. Our aim is to impress on our children that everything in the universe points to God (Romans 11:36) and reveals His glory. Everything was created by the Word of His power and exists by His sustaining grace (Hebrews 1:3).

doctrinal depth.

We believe that children can handle deep truth at a young age. We must fill them with sound, solid truth that is biblical and consistent with what we teach adults. This will provide them with a firm foundation throughout their life (2 Timothy 3:15).

necessarily incremental.

The Bible is our model. We learn the profound truths of God "line upon line" and "precept upon precept." Truths learned at an early age, even preschool, will consistently be reintroduced and deeper truth will be exposed (Isaiah 28:10).

practical and applicable.

Faith comes from hearing and hearing from the Word of God (Romans 10:17). But teaching can't be just words. We want the truth to be clearly understood. Children must be involved in the learning process — looking up Scripture passages, discovering answers, and responding in obedience. We want children to understand the relationship between Scripture and his/her life and the implications of biblical truth and what response is required of them.

essentially theological.

We have a dedicated view of theology — young people need a theology. They need doctrine. They need to know the Word of God intimately. They cannot be kept from error or superficial faith if they do not know the Word (2 Timothy 3:16-17). God is sovereign in the affairs of man. From salvation, to sanctification, to the final glorification of the believer, God's grace is our promised source.

parent partnered.

We believe God has ordained that parents have the primary responsibility for the spiritual nurture of their children (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). The first and foremost avenue to nurturing faith in children is in the context of the family. Therefore, we are dedicated to ministry that “walks alongside” parents in their work by equipping, supporting and encouraging them. We strongly encourage parental involvement as we endeavor to bring the church and home together as partners in nurturing the faith of the next generation.

long-term oriented.

The truth of Scripture has immediate benefit in instruction and application, but the ultimate benefit is the maturing of the believer into Christ-likeness — and that work is never completed (2 Peter 1:5-8).

edifying to servants.

The church has a mandate to edify and equip servants for the work of ministry by providing spiritual leadership and resources that promote growth in Christlikeness (Ephesians 4:11-16). Children's Ministry provides many opportunities to serve and grow while at the same time strengthening the church by embracing their mandate to serve. These servants are also edified as they communicate God's truth to children and each other on a weekly basis.

The following is a quote from Bethlehem Baptist Church's *A Philosophy of Ministry to Parents and Children*.

It is our conviction that there is much we can do to nurture the faith of the children and youth who have been entrusted to us. As we see the world's agenda for our children and youth, we sense a tremendous urgency for Christian parents and for the church to bring forth an even stronger agenda for God in the lives of our offspring. Our vision for children and youth must be greater than the world's vision. May it never be said of us that we stood by and watched while the world molded our children.

Instead, may God use us to actively influence their hearts, so by grace they might become men and women of faith who know God and His glorious attributes and His infinite glory. May they be faithful followers of Christ who love the Bible, affirm its infallible worth, and grow in their abilities to understand, express, and defend its teachings. May they learn to worship the Lord with their heads and their hearts, and to fill their lives with prayer as they grow in faith and win the lost!