

HERE'S WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT  
LEE ANN MANCINI AND  
*RAISING KIDS TO FOLLOW CHRIST...*

*Raising Kids to Follow Christ* by Lee Ann Mancini is a much-needed resource for the times in which we find ourselves. As Mancini so accurately states, “Christianity is being attacked on every imaginable level...” Indeed. More than ever, parents—and every adult believer with influence in the lives of children—must be committed to imparting a thoroughly biblical view of life and faith. Lee Ann Mancini is a compelling voice that God has raised up to inspire and equip. It is a joy to recommend her book, and I pray that countless numbers of people will benefit from her work.

—Alex McFarland

Author, educator, religion correspondent

*Raising Kids to Follow Christ* is a must-read for parents wanting to build a strong spiritual foundation in their children. Lee Ann Mancini’s expertly crafted guide offers practical strategies and biblical insights, making it an invaluable resource to nurture faith within the family.

—Ryan Frank

CEO and publisher, KidzMatter

Lee Ann Mancini has penned a well-researched, extensive handbook for parenting with a biblically based worldview. Lee Ann has captured the heart of the Creator toward parents and children. Wisdom, compassion, love, truth, and beauty are woven throughout this power-packed parenting manual. If you are a parent who wants *more* for your children, grandchildren, and the next generation, this guide will equip you to train and transform them to grow leaders and lovers of Christ and the church and bring hope to a world that needs revival, redemption, and restoration by providing authentic Christians as bright lights reflecting the Savior and His heart for humankind.

—Pam Farrel

Codirector, Love-Wise

Coauthor, *The 10 Best Decisions Every Parent Can Make*

This remarkable book holds the keys to establishing a spiritual bedrock in your child's life. It blends practical wisdom with biblical principles and provides a comprehensive roadmap, empowering you to foster a lifelong connection to faith within your child. It's a great read for every Christian parent.

—Dr. Scott Turansky  
Cofounder, National Center for Biblical Parenting

Many Christian parents want to pass along their faith to their children yet feel ill-equipped to do that. Author Lee Ann Mancini shows parents how to set the stage to influence and encourage their children's faith development. *Raising Kids to Follow Christ* is filled with biblical strategies and techniques crafted to awaken and grow that faith. This book is the tool you want to be the spiritual leader your child needs.

—Lori Wildenberg  
Parent coach  
Author, *The Messy Life of Parenting*

What could be more important in parenting than raising children who know Christ? Our kids must decide their eternal destiny for themselves, but we can certainly create a home environment where it's hard to deny the truth and love of God. The world says academic excellence, good looks, or athletic prowess will set up our kids for success. This book reminds us of what is truly important in life: to obey the Lord and follow Him.

—Arlene Pellicane  
Author, *Parents Rising*  
Host, *Happy Home Podcast*

What a wonderful gift Lee Ann Mancini has provided in *Raising Kids to Follow Christ*. Lee Ann has the heart of a shepherd and the wisdom of a seasoned parent. She provides practical guidance to parents with children at every age and stage. If you've got parenting figured out, then this book is not for you. For the rest of us, here is good medicine that will help us raise children who know, love, and serve Jesus for a lifetime.

—Dr. Josh Mulvihill  
Executive director, Renewanation  
Author, *Biblical Grandparenting*

Raising children in today's world is hard—much harder than I expected it to be when I became a mom eighteen-plus years ago. Though sin has been prevalent since the fall of man, the ideologies our kids are exposed to and the societal pressures placed on them from today's media are unprecedented. More than ever, parents must be intentional about finding every opportunity to point their children to their Savior, and it doesn't happen by chance. We cannot count on the church or schools to do it. It's our responsibility, and it is a calling that, if not taken seriously, can have eternal consequences. *Raising Kids to Follow Christ* is full of biblical wisdom and practical advice. Lee Ann shares from her own personal experiences as a mom who raised her own kids to follow Christ, but more importantly, she guides parents through what Scripture says about parenting and discipleship. This book is certain to reach the hearts of both new and experienced parents and will no doubt be a resource I will return to time and time again.

—Yvette Hampton  
Producer and host, *Schoolhouse Rocked: The Homeschool Revolution*

In a world of compromise and confusion, *Raising Kids to Follow Christ* is the timely resource you need. Author Lee Ann Mancini says, “One of the most important decisions parents will make is how to raise their children to become strong, Bible-based disciples of Jesus.” Raising kids to follow Christ doesn’t just happen—it requires wisdom, resolve, and a biblical foundation. This book offers practical parenting principles and engaging stories to help you partner with Christ to raise strong Christian kids.

—*Rhonda Stoppe*  
Podcast host, *Old Ladies Know Stuff*  
Author, *Moms Raising Sons to Be Men*

RAISING  
KIDS  
TO FOLLOW  
CHRIST

*Instilling a Lifelong Trust in God*



LEE ANN MANCINI



WHITAKER  
HOUSE

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## **RAISING KIDS TO FOLLOW CHRIST** **Instilling a Lifelong Trust in God**

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# CONTENTS

Foreword.....	9
Introduction .....	11
1. The Perfect Cornerstone and Foundation .....	16
2. It's Always the Right Time.....	21
3. The Divine Parenting Manual .....	27
4. Making Obedience Easier Through Discipline.....	37
5. Continued Character Development for Obedient Heart Transformation .....	61
6. Building a Strong Christian Foundation .....	74
7. Practical Methods for Connecting Children to Jesus....	92
8. Cultivating Trust in God and Parental Guidance .....	99
9. Helping to Shape a Godly Worldview.....	107
10. Why Do We Believe What We Believe?.....	120
11. Instilling Virtues in Children.....	134
12. Instilling Fruit of the Spirit .....	151
13. Have Fun Learning Together .....	159
Conclusion.....	169
Questions for Reflection.....	171

Bibliography .....	178
Bible Index.....	183
About the Author.....	190



# I

## THE PERFECT CORNERSTONE AND FOUNDATION

**T**he Sand Palace is a beautiful home built on the shore in Mexico Beach, Florida. On October 10, 2018, Hurricane Michael, a category 5 hurricane with winds reaching 160 mph, tore through and destroyed the Florida Panhandle. Mexico Beach was one of the hardest-hit areas, where homes and businesses were decimated, leaving nothing but bare foundations. However, the Sand Palace was largely untouched, standing tall on its stilts above the carnage and destruction all around. Everyone wanted to know why this home survived in such pristine condition.

The homeowners of the Sand Palace were wise enough to build their home to withstand 240 to 250 mph winds, despite Florida's state code that requires houses to be built to withstand 120 mph winds. Instead of 30-foot pilings, the Sand Palace was built with 40-foot pilings made of poured concrete walls with rebar and steel cables. Why? One owner explained:

At every point, from pilings to the roof and everything in between, when it came time to make a decision about what level of material or what to use, we didn't pay attention to code...We went above and beyond code, and we

asked the question: “What would survive the big one?”  
And we consistently tried to build it for that.<sup>5</sup>

The Sand Palace is a perfect analogy for Matthew 7:24–27:

*Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.*

Perhaps there’s something from both stories that we can take on our parenting journeys.

## IT STARTS BEFORE BIRTH

Praying for your child should begin even before conception and continue during pregnancy. The perinatal nurse who oversees the Nurturing Your Newborn ministry at a church I attended repeatedly encourages the young mothers in her classes to pray out loud for their babies every single day, not only for the mental and physical health of both mother and infant, but also for the faith that child will grow to have. As a nurse and the mother of two God-loving young adults, she could testify about the importance of laying the foundation of faith even before that precious child is born.

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5. Eric Levenson, “This home on Mexico Beach survived Hurricane Michael. That’s no coincidence,” *CNN*, October 16, 2018, [www.cnn.com/2018/10/15/us/mexico-beach-house-hurricane-trnd/index.html](http://www.cnn.com/2018/10/15/us/mexico-beach-house-hurricane-trnd/index.html).

God's Word tells us, "*You desired faithfulness **even in the womb**; you taught me wisdom in that secret place*" (Psalm 51:6). God told the prophet Jeremiah, "*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, **before you were born I set you apart***" (Jeremiah 1:5). The prophet Isaiah said, "*The LORD called me **from the womb***" (Isaiah 49:1 ESV). King David, the man after God's own heart, acknowledged God from birth. (See 1 Samuel 13:14; Psalm 22:9). Timothy knew the Scriptures from the time he was an infant. (See 2 Timothy 3:15.)

The Lord was the anchor and hope for these amazing men's souls *from the beginning*, keeping them from drifting away. "*We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure*" (Hebrews 6:19).

Children need a sturdy anchor, a solid foundation of truth, and the knowledge that these tools will keep them secure from turbulent winds and storms in times of trouble. The largest tree will fall if its roots (its anchors) are not deep enough to support it. Helical piles are deep-foundation elements (anchors) used to support buildings. The sturdiness and strength of a structure are only as solid as the foundation it rests upon. Shirley K. Morgenthaler says:

Stone by stone, we set the foundation for the expectations of living—the traditions and values...The foundation must be laid before the walls or floors can be added...God has been the perfect Architect. His design has been flawless... the important is always worth doing, *right from the start*... Without that anchor, the unknown can be dreaded and feared. With the Holy Spirit as our mooring and foundation, the future is welcomed no matter what it holds.<sup>6</sup>

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6. Dr. Shirley K. Morgenthaler, *Right from the Start: A Parent's Guide to the Young Child's Faith Development* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2001).

## PREPARING THE FOUNDATION

My friend Chris's dad loved to garden. From the time his grandkids were toddlers, he taught them how to grow nutritious food to eat or beautiful flowers to touch and smell by planting seeds in the right soil. Chris says her two children delighted in helping Grandpa till and fertilize the ground, plant the seeds, water the garden, and eventually pick the vegetables and flowers.

Spiritually, the process is much the same. *Preparing the soil*—from the time children are in the womb to three years of age—is the first step in building a solid foundation to support their spiritual life. Without preparation, the foundation could become weak, giving the world a chance to dismantle or destroy what has been constructed.

Even if this spiritual work begins after the child's third birthday, the foundation can still be built upon good soil. Honestly, I wish I had discovered and applied many of the things that I learned in my research as I was raising my children. I did my best with what I knew, and God was faithful to call my children to Him. I thank God that He can restore whatever has been lost, as it's never too late to start transforming their hearts and minds. *"I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten—the great locust and the young locust, the other locusts and the locust swarm—my great army that I sent among you"* (Joel 2:25).

If you didn't start early with your children, please don't feel guilty. How can you be guilty of not doing something you didn't know? God is able to bless your faithfulness whenever you obey what you have learned.

Nothing can prepare children for life lessons more effectively than the Word of God. I remember reading the story about Mack, a first-time father who took this truth to heart. As he was preparing the nursery for his unborn son, he wrote passages of Scripture on the walls before he painted them hunter green. These words

of God's wisdom, love, and truth will surround Mack's son as he grows.

Just as the Sand Palace was built to withstand destructive elements, we want to raise our children to withstand the evil intentions of Satan, who comes only "*to steal and kill and destroy*" (John 10:10). We do this by adhering to the Word of God and seeking the guidance of His Holy Spirit.