

WILL THEY STAND



Parenting Kids to Face the GIANTS

KEN HAM

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Dedicated to our family:

Our son Nathan and his wife Kristy, and their children Malachi and his wife Abigail, Kathryn, Noah, Madelyn, Emma, and Olivia. Our daughter Renee and her husband Bodie, and their children Kylie, Caleb, Lacey, and Lexi. Our daughter Danielle and her husband Joe, and their children Nicole, Kendra, Declan, and Lillianne. Our son Jeremy and his wife Susan, and their children Josiah, Amelia, Tiberius, and Baby Girl (our #18 grandchild), and our “California girl,” our daughter Kristel.

Ken and Mally Ham

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PREFACE

*Avery Foley,
writer and speaker with Answers in Genesis*

- 94% of Belgian Doctors Support “After-birth Abortions” for Babies Born with Disabilities
- Pennsylvania District Mandates White Supremacy Lessons for Kindergartners
- California Legislators Approve Taxpayer-Funded Sterilization of Transgender Children
- Drag Queen Story Hour UK Reveals True Colors with “Love Has No Age” Tweet

By the time you read this, those headlines will be forgotten, replaced by even more startling, more extreme headlines as our Western culture dives deeper into the abyss of depravity. Freed from the once Christianized heritage that kept it moored to God’s Word and a form of Christian morality, it seems with each passing day, our culture becomes more akin to the world before the Flood when

“every intention of the thoughts of [mankind’s] heart was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5).

This is the world our children and grandchildren are growing up in. A world where drag queen story hours are just something that happens. Where taxpayers foot the bill for the mutilation of perfectly healthy organs as men yearn to “be” women, and women men. Where children with disabilities are discarded before, or after, birth. Where fighting racism means teaching it in a different form.

The title of Ken Ham’s original book was *Raising Godly Children in an Ungodly World*. In our Western culture, we no longer live in “merely” an ungodly world — we are living in an anti-God world. Biblical teachings are mocked and reviled, slapped with the label of “hate speech.” Those who believe the Bible, and live and act according to these beliefs, are vilified and face harassment, public censure, and slander for their stance. It’s a hostile world, and Western nations are no longer the refuge they once were for those who believe the Bible.

How do we raise young men and women who will stand for biblical truth and the gospel in a world that just wants to silence them? In this book, Ken challenges parents (and this applies to

grandparents as well!) to apply biblical principles to their most important job of all — discipling the next generation for Christ.

I had the sincere privilege of interviewing Ken's wife, Mally Ham, for chapter 11 of this book, as well as giving my thoughts on the initial manuscript and writing this preface at Ken's request. As a parent to three young children, I believe this book is a powerful resource and a loud wake-up call to parents to prayerfully consider the legacy they are crafting and to get back to the authority of God's Word and what matters most when it comes to parenting so we can raise a generation that knows what they believe, why they believe it, and can boldly stand on the gospel of Jesus Christ and the authority of the Word in a world filled with so many towering giants.

INTRODUCTION

Ken Ham

This is a very different book — certainly different from anything I’ve written so far. It is part journal, part tribute, part devotional, and part “how-to.” It’s also all heart, an expression of a passion, conviction, and commitment to the Word of God, all of which was instilled in me by my parents. It’s very personal too, as I offer glimpses into my childhood, adult life, and a number of my life experiences. You will find these glimpses sometimes humorous, frustrating, or convicting, but as learning experiences for us all.

As I share with you journeys in the Ham family, you will see us, warts and all. I will share stories of being raised in Australia, a country that by anyone’s standards would be considered non-Christian and pagan. I’ll talk about my years as a student and a teacher, and about the surprising paths that brought me to where I am today as one of the leaders of the worldwide Answers in Genesis ministry. I’ll even give you my bird’s-eye view of the church

as I've ministered in hundreds of churches worldwide — now that opens the door for some very interesting stories! Although I include many biographical details, this book is not a biography, but takes selected events from my upbringing to specially deal with the topic of raising godly offspring. I pray that the words ahead will bring glory to God for all He has done — and all He continues to do — for my family and yours as well.

In my capacity as a speaker for Answers in Genesis, I write and speak most often on topics related to the creation/evolution debate and Genesis. Over the years I have also developed messages about how the Genesis foundation (and the doctrines that are built upon it) impacts day-to-day life. I have come to understand that the battle over Genesis (particularly the history in Genesis 1–11) is not just about origins, it's about the foundation for our Christian worldview that affects every area of life.

I am greatly concerned with the condition of many church families. The statistics are discouraging, and the situation appears to be going from bad to worse, with the possibility that much of the coming generations could be entirely lost to the ways of the Lord. In the USA (and this is also true to an even worse extent in the rest of the Western

world), only 11% of millennials (Generation Y) attend church weekly,¹ and it seems only 9%² of Generation Z are regular church attenders! And they are twice as likely to be atheist as any previous generation!³ As a result, the worldview of the culture is changing catastrophically. Because of my unique upbringing and understanding of the authority of the Word of God, I have been convicted to write this book in the hope that many more godly offspring will be produced for the Lord. I earnestly believe the trends we see can be reversed, one family at a time. But this is going to take some dramatic changes in many families.

To that end, this book is about the family — the Christian family. Specifically, I will do my best to answer this question: What does God’s Word teach us regarding roles of parents and how to bring up children? As we find answers to these overriding questions, other important questions will be answered as well:

- Why is the family disintegrating?

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1. “GSS Data Explorer: How Often Respondents Attends Religious Services,” General Social Survey, accessed May 5, 2020, <https://gssdataexplorer.norc.org/trends/Religion%20&%20Spirituality?measure=attend>.
 2. George Barna, *Gen Z* (Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 2018), 26.
 3. *Ibid.*, 14.

- What is a godly legacy and why is it vital to our families and our society?
- What is God's purpose and meaning for the family?
- What is the primary importance of marriage?
- What are God's roles for the husband and wife in a family?
- How are we to train our kids and place ourselves in a position to answer our children's potentially faith-shattering questions?
- Is Christian education an option?
- Should all children be homeschooled?
- Are Christian children meant to be salt and light in the public schools?
- What is the state of Christian education?
- How are we to implement godly discipline and teach our children discernment?
- What is happening to the modern church?

The answers to these vital parenting questions (and many, many more) are found in the Bible, starting with the Book of Genesis. The sufficiency and authority of Scripture, properly interpreted and understood, gives us the basis for godly parenting.

As you take God's Word and apply its eternal principles to the everyday issues you face with your family, you will begin to create a godly heritage — a legacy that will impact the generations to come in ways you never dreamed possible.

I am, by God's grace, the head of a major Christian organization, and an author of many books. Through our websites, conferences, radio programs, and written literature, and our two major themed attractions, the Creation Museum and the Ark Encounter, God is using the ministry of Answers in Genesis to influence tens of thousands of lives throughout the world on a daily basis. As I address these vital topics regarding parenting, I will share, as best I understand them, the influences which have guided my life and shaped me into who I am today. I will also lay down the biblical foundation for raising godly children that I have learned from my parents and with my godly wife over many years. As I share all this with you, it is my hope that these personal words will challenge us concerning the legacy we are leaving in our children. I pray you will be equipped to train up a generation that will stand on God's Word with boldness and will not be intimidated by the secularist giants that come against them.



CHAPTER
ONE

LEAVING A LASTING LEGACY

*A good man leaves an inheritance to his
children's children (Proverbs 13:22).*



On the northern tip of Australia lies a nondescript outpost called “Thursday Island.” Sparsely inhabited by indigenous people from Papua New Guinea, and surrounded by the deep blues of the sea, the small and quiet community serves as the commercial center for the Torres Strait Islands, a small cluster of tropical islands just off Cape York.

On the 22nd of October, 1928, a child came into the world on this little-known island, his birth going unnoticed by all except a few. It was an unremarkable entrance into human existence, in an unremarkable location, far from the cities and headlines that concerned the rest of the world at that time.

The second of two children, the child grew through humble means and hard work in a land that was raw and full of potential. As the son of an educator, he learned his lessons well, many of them the hard way. He made music upon the violin and banjo mandolin and learned his three R's by the light of a gas lamp when the day was through.

When he was 16, his father died. With no earthly father to guide him into adulthood, he turned to his Heavenly Father for direction, stability, and a model after which to shape his life. In the words of the Bible he found all he needed; the Book fed both his passion for learning and his heart for his Lord and Creator. In the hospital just before his father passed into glory on the 9th of June, 1995, my late brother Robert asked him a question: "Dad, why did you love God's Word so much?" His answer: "After my earthly father died, I then turned to the words of my Heavenly Father and read them over and over again." Dad saturated himself in the Word of God.

As the world began to heal from the wounds of World War II, the son of the educator chose to become an educator himself, investing his career in the next generation as a teacher, administrator, and principal. With his new bride in one hand and his Bible in the other, he set out to make an eternal

difference in his world. As his passion for truth and the lost continued to grow, he became a powerful and articulate defender of his faith and the Word he so desperately loved, in his home, his schools, his church, and his community.

Then, on October 20, 1951, in the northern town of Cairns, he did a most remarkable thing: He became a father — but not just any father; he became *my* father — the man I will forever call “Dad.” On the day I was born he became the most important man I would ever know on the face of this earth.

With a family now in tow, and the decades beginning to slip away, he seized every day as an opportunity to influence his world for truth and to shape his children into those who would love God and His Word. Through his words and through his life, he imparted lessons that will be forever etched in my mind and in the hearts of my four living siblings, and in the heart of my late brother Robert (who was a great teacher of the Word): **Whatever you do, you do it 100 percent.**

Dad never did anything half-heartedly. If it was worth doing at all, he did it as best he could. His reports as an educator were first class; his

interaction with students and other teachers was always focused and intentional. He had chosen to serve the world as an educator, but he approached the task with an intensity that reflected the truth in Colossians 3:23–24: “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.”

In those days, Australian educators were transferred every few years as they climbed the promotional ladder. Approximately every three years or so we would pack up the family and move to a different location throughout the state of Queensland. Finally reaching the top as a principal of a class 1 school, we settled down in the city of Brisbane, where he continued his work and his parenting with passion and devotion.

What you do at the top filters down and brings others up. Dad showed us that a leader has responsibility, because those who follow are greatly influenced by the one out in front. In Luke 6:40, Jesus said: “A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.”

By his example, Dad illustrated this truth in clear ways, both in his schools and in our home.

Who we are impacts those in our charge, either for good or for bad. While other principals (and many teachers) hit the pub after work and wondered why their teachers were sluggish in the mornings, Dad upheld his moral integrity . . . and his teachers and faculty followed. His schools were simply the best in the territory.

Invest where it counts. Through our parents, we learned about godly generosity. Our house was a well-known stopping-off point for missionaries, and Mum and Dad freely gave whatever assistance they could to ministers of the Word — they had such passion to see the gospel proclaimed and people saved. On one occasion, a missionary needed money to continue his journey, and my parents gave him the little they had, never letting on what a phenomenal sacrifice it was for them.

If my parents acquired some household goods, resulting in them not needing a piece of furniture or some other item, they would look for a needy person to give the excess piece. Generous with their finances, possessions, and time, they always exhibited such joy in helping others. They understood and practiced Matthew 6:19–21:

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where

thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

As their children, we recognized that the Lord is good and generous, so why not help others? Where did I learn that? Mum and Dad for sure.

Take action and take risk. Dad was a risk taker and a man of action. He and Mum never really wondered how to get something done, they just did it. Whether it was bringing missionaries into town for a campaign, starting a Sunday school, or giving more than they reasonably should, they rarely counted the costs. If they felt the burden that something should happen, they made it happen. They were like Nehemiah, who, when he saw the walls of Jerusalem and the temple of God in ruins, was burdened to do something about it. When he saw the leaders treating the people unjustly, he asked the question, “Why isn’t someone doing something?” He acted and took it upon himself to rebuild the holy city and ensure justice for the people. Daniel 11:32 says: “. . . but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action.”

My father and mother were known as people of strength and action, even when the task before them was filled with great risk. Did this affect us as their children? Of course it did. When they took risks and acted, we saw time and time again the provision of God, giving us the faith to act as well. Like my father, I've been a risk taker, too. When I look at the history of Answers in Genesis, I just shake my head. I don't know how we did it back then, and I don't know how we are doing it now. The people involved, the growing vision, the incredible provision of God every time we take a step . . . it's miraculous, I think. I doubt I ever would have learned to take risks (which are really just steps of faith, carefully and prayerfully thought through) and to take action had I not grown up with the model of my parents.

Defend the faith wherever you might be. Australia is quite a large country, about the same size as the 48 states of the continental United States. The population, however, is rather small, currently about 25 million. It is a land of rich natural resources, but spiritually, it is a dry, dry desert. The number of true born-again Christians in my homeland is probably only 1 or 2 percent. Only a maximum of 16 percent attend churches of any kind

regularly.¹ In this land of great spiritual need, our parents instilled in us the conviction to be missionaries and defenders of the faith, no matter where we happened to be.

Some of the small towns we were transferred to only had one or two churches, and sometimes there were no Sunday schools at all in the rural areas where Dad's school was located. I remember my parents starting up Sunday schools so they could reach children with the truth of God's Word and the gospel. Sunday after Sunday they would drive from house to house, picking up kids and packing them in the car like sardines . . . with no seatbelts, of course. (I know, you could get arrested for that today, but back then it's just what they did to do what they knew had to be done.)

The lack of churches in the cities we lived in often made it difficult to find one that stood on the authority of God's Word. Not all the churches we attended had pastors who took the stand they should have on God's Word. Many times, I recall my father, with my mother and us children in tow,

1. McCrindle, "Faith and Belief in Australia," accessed May 5, 2020, <https://2xnd9o36f4oj3bjpe25jqfz-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Faith-and-Giving-in-Australia-Report-digital.pdf>.

going up to the pastor after a service. With Bible in hand he would calmly challenge the pastor about some of the things he said in his sermon, quoting Scriptures that resounded with the phrases “Thus said the Lord” or “It is written. . . .” Dad just loved the passages that proclaimed, “Thus says the Lord,” “It is written,” and “Have you not read. . . ?” (To this day, when I quote verses that contain these phrases, an image of my father confronting liberal pastors pops into my mind!)

As we were transferred around, my father served on many different deacon/elder boards of churches throughout the state of Queensland. I gained an interesting perspective on the church as we attended churches including Brethren, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist. Often Dad would come home from a meeting really upset that someone didn't seem to want to take a stand on issues he believed were vital. Whether it was Sunday school material, mission outreach, or discipline that needed to be applied to a wayward member, my father wanted to do what God's Word clearly taught, but many times others in leadership didn't want to “rock the boat,” or they wanted to smooth over the situations without confrontation. Not our dad. He wasn't afraid to shake things up when necessary. I

heard them call Dad “Merv the stirrer” because he didn’t hesitate to jump in and ruffle some feathers if the integrity of the Word was at stake.

Was he correct in all instances? Probably not, and I’m not even aware of all the situations he was involved in. Even if my father wasn’t always right in every situation, I know his heart was in the right place every time. To the best of his understanding, he wanted to do things God’s way. If that meant being called a “stirrer,” then so be it. He put God’s Word before losing church members or friends if someone needed confronting in a biblical manner.

We learned that vital lesson well as his children, and it’s important that you do the same. If you take the Bible seriously, live by it, and defend it when it is compromised, you will likely be tarred with the same brush. I have experienced the same stereotyping as my father from certain people over the years from both secularists and those in the church. No matter how graciously you put across scriptural truth, you will also potentially be viewed in a similar manner.

Yes, Dad was considered a “boat rocker,” and he was prepared to make waves when necessary. He felt that if you needed to create a tsunami to make

things right, then so be it. Sure, he cared about what people thought of him, he cared about them very much . . . but he cared about the Bible more. The Word of God was the foundation of his life. It was the air in his lungs and the blood in his veins. He never ceased to read it, contemplate it, apply it, and defend it. In 2 Timothy 4:1–5, Paul exhorted Timothy with a great challenge, a challenge that my father accepted as his own:

I charge you . . . preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they . . . will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Daily, he would study and study so he could be prepared to defend the Christian faith against false teaching and the claims that the Bible contained contradictions. Whether it was the worldwide Flood, the feeding of the 5,000, or arguing against the possibility that man evolved from molecules to an apelike creature to man over millions

of years, Dad defended the Word of God as if his life depended upon it . . . which, in fact, it did. Many years later, I realized he was an apologist, teaching his family answers (apologetics) to defend the Christian faith against the attacks of that time that would undermine the authority of the Word of God. I also came to understand that he was teaching me to think foundationally — that God’s Word is the foundation for our entire worldview.

He was always very adamant about one thing — if you can’t trust the Book of Genesis as literal history, then you can’t trust the rest of the Bible. After all, every single doctrine of biblical theology is founded in the history of Genesis 1–11. My father had not developed his thinking in this area as much as we have today at Answers in Genesis, but he clearly understood that if Adam wasn’t created from dust, and that if he didn’t fall into sin as Genesis states, then the gospel message of the New Testament can’t be true either.

When it came to apparent contradictions or scientific conflict, he would say something like this: “Kenneth, even though I don’t have the answers in this area doesn’t mean there aren’t any — it just means we don’t have them at this time. We need to ask God to provide us with answers — but even if

he doesn't, this is no reason to reject God's Word." Dad (and Mum) hated compromise, and such a stand has had a lasting impact on my life.

Dad, by example and through his teaching, had helped me understand something that has been with me since that time: When something we learn contradicts Scripture, we need to first of all go to the Bible and study the words in context very carefully. If, after doing this, we are sure the Bible still clearly means what we had previously gleaned, then we need to question the ideas that contradict the Bible's words. Then, even if we can't find an explanation that shows where the secular idea is in error, we need to continue to search and wait for the answer. Even if we don't find answers in our lifetime, we cannot reinterpret Scripture. To do so would be to make man's ideas infallible and God's Word fallible. This would put us on a course of compromise and unbelief through the rest of Scripture, and Dad often warned us of this "slippery slope." This lesson I learned I believe is a major reason why Answers in Genesis has stayed the course. Sadly, many Christian organizations and churches have drifted away from God's Word as they have reinterpreted Scripture to fit with the changing culture of our day. No! We must judge the culture based on the absolute

authority of the Word of God. Thanks, Dad, for drumming this into me. My favorite photo of my Dad is of him with his Bible open in his lap teaching others:



These were some of the lessons learned from my parents — lessons that shaped my life in every way and continue to shape the lives of our children and those around us. God used them both to impact our lives as children, in ways we still cannot imagine. In the end, their example taught us vital priorities: We learned that life was to be lived with God first, others second, and self third.

Throughout my childhood and teenage years, two aspects of Dad's life made impressions on me more than all the others. First, he hated compromise. He would never knowingly compromise the

Word of God, and he took the scriptural warnings about compromise, purity of doctrine, and contending for the faith very seriously.² After all, he had saturated himself in the Word of God, so he knew what it taught. Second, he obeyed the pointed command made in 1 Peter 3:13–15:

Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. *Have no fear of them, nor be troubled*, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect [emphasis added].

Okay, in all honesty, he sometimes forgot about the “gentleness” part (none of us Hams will ever claim he was perfect!), but he had the rest of the passage down firm. He would stand up strongly for what he believed was true. He was a leader who listened to advice, but he was never intimidated by people who weren't willing to suffer in order to stay true to the Word of God. He was a man of

2. See Ps. 18:30, 56:4, 103:20, 119:1–176; Matt. 12:5, 19:4, 22:31; Mark 12:10; Luke 6:3; Phil. 1:10; 1 Tim. 1:5; 1 Pet. 1:22.

great conviction with a deep passion for the Word of God.

He was an uncompromising witness and defender of the gospel. God used him to lay a rock-solid foundation for our family and prepare us not only for this present life — but also for an eternity with our Creator. I cannot fathom the value of this inheritance which he left me. There is no doubt in my mind that the legacy of my father and mother, together with the Lord's calling on my life, is the reason I came to be in the ministry of Answers in Genesis — now reaching millions of people around the world. And I have to add that the ministry would not be where it is today without the sacrificial dedication of my godly wife, Mally (and Nannan to 17 [+1 on the way at the time of writing] grandkids). That's a book in itself.



