

## 35 Gifts Your Children Will Never Forget

WRITTEN BY JOSHUA BECKER



*“You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.” —Kahlil Gibran*

I have countless holiday memories. Most of them center around faith, family, and traditions.

**Very few childhood memories actually include the gifts I received.** I distinctly remember the year that I got a blue dirt bike, the evening my brother and I received a Nintendo, and opening socks every year from my grandparents. But other than that, my gift-receiving memories are pretty sparse. Which got me thinking... what type of gifts can we give to our children that they will never forget? What gifts will truly impact their lives and change them forever?

To that end, here is an alphabetical list.

### **35 Gifts Your Children Will Never Forget:**

**1. Affirmation.** Sometimes one simple word of affirmation can change an entire life. So make sure your children know how much you appreciate them. And then, remind them every chance you get.

- 2. Art.** With the advent of the Internet, everyone who wants to create... can. The world just needs more people who want to...
- 3. Challenge.** Encourage your child to dream big dreams. In turn, they will accomplish more than they thought possible... and probably even more than you thought possible.
- 4. Compassion/Justice.** Life isn't fair. It never will be – there are just too many variables. But when a wrong has been committed or a playing field can be leveled, I want my child to be active in helping to level it.
- 5. Contentment.** The need for more is contagious. Therefore, one of the greatest gifts you can give your children is an appreciation for being content with what they have... but not with who they are.
- 6. Curiosity.** Teach your children to ask questions about who, what, where, how, why, and why not. "Stop asking so many questions" are words that should never leave a parents' mouth.
- 7. Determination.** One of the greatest determining factors in one's success is the size of their will. How can you help grow your child's today?
- 8. Discipline.** Children need to learn everything from the ground-up including appropriate behaviors, how to get along with others, how to get results, and how to achieve their dreams. Discipline should not be avoided or withheld. Instead, it should be consistent and positive.
- 9. Encouragement.** Words are powerful. They can create or they can destroy. The simple words that you choose to speak today can offer encouragement and positive thoughts to another child. Or your words can send them further into despair. So choose them carefully.
- 10. Faithfulness to your Spouse.** Faithfulness in marriage includes more than just our bodies. It also includes our eyes, mind, heart, and soul. Guard your sexuality daily and devote it entirely to your spouse. Your children will absolutely take notice.
- 11. Finding Beauty.** Help your children find beauty in everything they see... and in everyone they meet.
- 12. Generosity.** Teach your children to be generous with *your* stuff so that they will become **generous** with *theirs*.

**13. Honesty/Integrity.** Children who learn the value and importance of **honesty** at a young age have a far greater opportunity to become honest adults. And honest adults who deal truthfully with others tend to feel better about themselves, enjoy their lives more, and sleep better at night.

**14. Hope.** Hope is knowing and believing that things will get better and improve. It creates strength, endurance, and resolve. And in the desperately difficult times of life, it calls us to press onward.

**15. Hugs and Kisses.** I once heard the story of a man who told his 7-year old son that he had grown too old for kisses. I tear up every time I think of it. Know that your children are never too old to receive physical affirmation of your love for them.

**16. Imagination.** If we've learned anything over the past 20 years, it's that life is changing faster and faster with every passing day. The world tomorrow looks nothing like the world today. And the people with imagination are the ones not just living it, they are creating it.

**17. Intentionality.** I believe strongly in intentional living and intentional parenting. Slow down, consider who you are, where you are going, and how to get there. And do the same for each of your children.

**18. Your Lap.** It's the best place in the entire world for a book, story, or conversation. And it's been right in front of you the whole time.

**19. Lifelong Learning.** A passion for learning is different from just studying to earn a grade or please teachers. It begins in the home. So read, ask questions, analyze, and expose. In other words, learn to love learning yourself.

**20. Love.** ...but the greatest of these is love.

**21. Meals Together.** Meals provide unparalleled opportunity for relationship, the likes of which cannot be found anywhere else. So much so, that a family that does not eat together does not grow together.

**22. Nature.** Children who learn to appreciate the world around them take care of the world around them. As a parent, I am frequently asking my kids to keep their rooms inside the house neat, clean, and orderly. Shouldn't we also be teaching them to keep their world outside neat, clean, and orderly?

**23. Opportunity.** Kids need opportunities to experience new things so they can find out what they enjoy and what they are good at. And contrary to popular belief, this doesn't have to require much money.

**24. Optimism.** Pessimists don't change the world. Optimists do.

**25. Peace.** On a worldwide scale, you may think this is out of our hands. But in relation to the people around you, this is completely within your hands... and that's a darn good place to start.

**26. Pride. Celebrate the little things in life.** After all, it is the little accomplishments in life that become the big accomplishments.

**27. Room to Make mistakes.** Kids are kids. That's what makes them so much fun... and so desperately in need of your patience. Give them room to experiment, explore, and make mistakes.

**28. Self-Esteem.** People who learn to value themselves are more likely to have self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-worth. As a result, they are more likely to become adults who respect their values and stick to them... even when no one else is.

**29. Sense of Humor.** Laugh with your children everyday... for your sake and theirs.

**30. Spirituality.** Faith elevates our view of the universe, our world, and our lives. We would be wise to instill into our kids that they are more than just flesh and blood taking up space. They are also made of mind, heart, soul, and will. And decisions in their life should be based on more than just what everyone else with flesh and blood is doing.

**31. Stability.** A stable home becomes the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. They need to know their place in the family, who they can trust, and who is going to be there for them. Don't keep changing those things.

**32. Time.** The gift of time is the one gift you can never get back or take back. So think carefully about who (or what) is getting yours.

**33. Undivided Attention.** Maybe this imagery will be helpful: Disconnect to Connect.

**34. Uniqueness.** What makes us different is what makes us special.

Uniqueness should not be hidden. It should be proudly displayed for all the world to see, appreciate, and enjoy.

**35. A Welcoming Home.** To know that you can always come home is among the sweetest and most life-giving assurances in all the world. Is your home breathing life into your child?

Of course, none of these gifts are on sale at your local department store. But, I think that's the point.