

# Choking The Weeds

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Have you ever encountered a strange silence on a Sunday morning in the preschool area or around the children's area in the church building due to an absence of children? I have preached at a couple of churches like that and in both cases I found that to be a dying church. Children are critical to the life and health of the local church. I have read many books on leadership within the Lord's church and I am sure all ministers would agree that most growing churches have at least one thing in common: children. Young families with children attract other young families with children, resulting in numerical growth. Jesus expressed the importance of children in Mark 10:13-16. In this gospel passage, the parents were bringing their children to Jesus, and the disciples were getting all bent out of shape. Jesus' reaction was one of displeasure toward his disciples. "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I assure you, anyone, who doesn't have faith like them will never get into the Kingdom of God." (Mark 10:13-16). Jesus is saying not only do they deserve the attention, guidance, and assistance of adults; but children are a picture and exemplify the faith of all Christians! Good solid leaders in the Lord's church will see this ministry as important and respond diligently. Solid leaders (elders, deacons, ministers) will be committed to providing quality Christian educational experiences for the children. Leaders who assess their goals for children's ministry might consider building on their strengths rather than maintaining all programs whether strong or weak. If the church has limited resources, and they focus their attention and energy on the weakest areas, then the strong areas often begin to suffer. Good leadership will work together to provide quality ministries. This is how parents will become energized and involved. Ministry excellence involves much more than planning a lesson on the way to church or just opening up a book and read it. Children are spiritual beings and deserve the very best! The secular culture is very intentional in seeking to teach our children the ways of evil. Many *Disney*, *PBS Kids*, and *Nickelodeon* shows are now teaching your children they can choose their gender, etc. If we were wise, we would learn from our enemy and endeavor to choke the weeds by the wheat. If we have the heart stored with Godly things then the vanities of the world will not so easily obtain a permanent residence. Here is the wisdom in training up a child. If we as church leaders and parents plant the mind early with the truth of God's word, and errors and lies will be choked out. The reality is if parents don't get involved then the false will soon spring up if we do not occupy the young mind with the truth! The truth is this if you don't want to teach your child to pray then the devil will teach him/her to swear. Many precious children are eating the junk processed food of the world, only because their homes are not providing a good set table of spiritual food. Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he grows older, he will not abandon it." Many in America sadly believe this verse only means taking them to a building we call church. The old preacher said it well, "*It is common sense to put the seal to the wax while it is soft.*" -Arthur Jackson

