



## First Baptist Church Fair Oaks Ranch

**Psalm 127:3-5** “Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.”

In one of my favorite passages, Psalm 127 creates an illustration of the power and impact of the parent child relationship. The psalm begins by declaring that children are a heritage from the Lord, emphasizing that they are a gift and a reward from God. Parenting is ultimately a stewardship of God's children. This idea is echoed in other parts of the Bible, such as Genesis 33:5, where Jacob acknowledges his children as gifts from God. The Hebrew concept for heritage implies a possession or something valuable passed down from one generation to the next. Every generation that passes is continued evidence of God's special favor upon humanity and especially families of faith. The blessing of children is also a prominent theme in Jewish prayers and rituals. For example, during the Friday night Shabbat meal, parents bless their children with the Priestly Blessing, asking God to grant them protection, grace, and peace.

The Psalmist creates a beautiful and powerful metaphor comparing children and arrows. Consider that arrows, when crafted and aimed correctly, can reach great distances and achieve significant impact. Similarly, children, when nurtured and guided properly, can grow to have a profound influence on the world at great distances into the future. The process of crafting an arrow involves careful selection of materials, shaping, and balancing, much like the upbringing of a child requires careful attention, education, and moral guidance. Archery requires skill, patience, and precision. An archer must carefully select and prepare his arrows, ensuring they are straight and balanced. A warrior is not passive; he is engaged in battle, using his arrows to achieve victory. Similarly, parents are called to be actively involved in their children's upbringing, providing guidance, discipline, and support. Parents must invest time and effort in raising their children, providing them with the necessary tools and guidance to navigate life. The archer must also aim with precision, taking into account factors such as wind and distance. This parallels the role of parents in guiding their children, helping them to set goals and make wise decisions, pointing them in a godly direction. Lastly, the archer only can aim the arrow while it is still in the bow. All of the pains taking effort to prepare the arrow, select a target, draw the bow and aim carefully is finished the moment the arrow leaves the end of the string. Thankfully, for parents, we have the opportunity to continue to influence our children when they leave our home and direct care, but the true time to do the aiming is when they are still in the bow.

The Hebrew word “to educate” has the same root word as “to dedicate”. This connection underscores the idea that educating children is a form of dedicating them to a life of purpose and service to the Lord. Just as a warrior carefully prepares his arrows, parents invest time and effort in teaching their children values, character, integrity, righteousness and faith. As a parent it is critical to realize the value of your efforts and the limited time you have to truly aim your kids.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, you have given us an amazing privilege and responsibility to aim our children toward godly things while there is still time. Help us to remember how short our days are and take seriously our charge to aim our children and launch them into life with the greatest precision. In Jesus Name.