

166 12/30/02 We must work to accept each child's uniqueness

A new year begins this week. A new year means new beginnings, fresh chances and hope. I want to challenge you to look at your children from a new perspective as we enter the next year.

Your children are the handiwork of God. He has a plan for their lives. They fit into his overall plan for mankind. God created their uniqueness.

David expressed this concept so beautifully: "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be." Psalm 139:14-16. The prophet Jeremiah also knew this truth: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart." Jeremiah 1:5a.

Children are often disobedient. In fact, parents must work diligently and unceasingly to teach children obedience. Children disobey because God gave them a free will just like he gave us. Rather than be angry with a child for disobedience, we should resolve to work even harder to teach obedience. As we work to teach obedience, we must remember that our child's free will is a God-given gift.

Every child is unique. We cannot expect a child to be something that he was not created to be. Some children will never be great athletes, mathematicians, or musicians. We should give them exposure in all areas, and then celebrate the talents where they do excel. As we work to accept our child's uniqueness—even if it is not what we expected in our child—we must remember that God created her just as He wanted her.

Accepting your child as God's creation for whom He has a plan will make your relationship with your child more enjoyable. You will still be annoyed at certain behaviors. There will be days when you want to run away to a quiet place where there are no parenting responsibilities. In those moments,

concentrating on the fact that God “fearfully and wonderfully made” your child should help you maintain your perspective. It will certainly make your child feel more loved.