



CHAPTER 1

PARENTS, LET'S BUILD FAITH AND TRUTH AT HOME

There are thousands of things we've been taught to do over the course of our lifetime. From basics such as reading or brushing our teeth to particulars such as baking a cake or playing golf, someone was your teacher. In many cases, a skill is learned or a concept is ingrained through the work of multiple people over the course of weeks or even years. "It takes a village" as the African proverb says. But as a parent, you were probably the first one to teach your child basic skills and then brought other trusted individuals into your child's life to help cultivate them as they grew.

Now consider this: how did you learn about Truth? Right and wrong? A Biblical worldview? Sin and forgiveness? Salvation and heaven? Surely someone taught you these things as well. If you grew up in a Christian home, you can probably remember learning these things from a Sunday School teacher, at a Bible camp, at Vacation Bible School, during a sermon, or from a Christian mentor.

If you weren't born into a Christian family and God used a faithful disciple to share the faith with you, what an awesome testimony you have as well!


Sadly, those who grew up in Christian homes rarely have a testimony of learning the faith in their homes... from their own parents and grandparents as the Bible instructs. Many of us grew up with an example of what a Christian does and doesn't do (for example: you do go to church, you don't do drugs; you do say prayers at the dinner table, you don't steal or cheat). These are good and right things, of course, but can often become compartmentalized if connections aren't made between "real life" and "church life."

Can you relate? I think one or two generations of American Christians have been raised on the false reality that going to church equals faith. Or that loving Jesus Christ is personal and so we don't talk about it – not with friends and certainly not with strangers (i.e. evangelism). But why would we if we don't even talk about it around the dinner table or family room of our own homes?

You are reading this today because we serve a sovereign God of grace and mercy. He loves us and calls to us even in our sin and rebellion. He draws individuals to himself even when we are running in the opposite direction. God's plan never fails.

Once we are saved, don't we want to be obedient? Don't we desire more and more of God and less and less of this world? And when we learn God's heart, His intention, His plan, we should want to get on board, follow His lead and trust His goodness!

This is why building faith and knowledge in Truth in our homes is so critical. We make investments into our child's learning in areas such as sports, academics, the arts, physical health and wellbeing. So we must ask ourselves the hard question: Am I putting the same effort (or any effort) into building their spiritual health and development?



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As Christians, our #1 goal is not for our children to be happy, popular or wealthy. Our first priority, Biblically, is that they know God, know the Bible, and ultimately, by God's grace, come to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

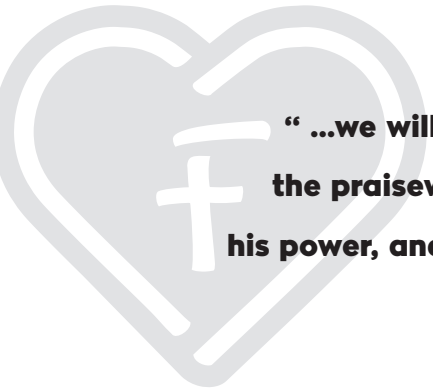
Are you in? Sometimes the journey will include laughter and fun. Sometimes the journey will be heart wrenching. You and I have approximately 18 years with each of our children. Although some days will feel incredibly long, I can assure you that the time is short. And the world is coming hard after our kids. If we are passive, remember the world is actively indoctrinating our children. Their thoughts and actions will reflect what they believe to be true about themselves and about the world. If we aren't teaching them, they are still learning! If that doesn't wake us up, I don't know what will... our kids are learning from us and from the world whether we're being intentional or not.

If we're not intentionally teaching them the Truth of the Bible, what are they learning from us? They are learning what is most important by how we spend our time, spend our money, talk to one other, prioritize our relationships. The world will show them what is valuable through media messages and advertisements. Once they are in school or sports or lessons, teachers and coaches will indoctrinate them (for good or bad) about how to work and act to get the desired results. {For the record, I think school, social activities, the arts, and sports are all generally good activities where our kids learn important life lessons, but we do still need to be involved, guide, and ask good questions throughout our kid's lives.}

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Even secular statistics report that children who have regular family meals together will make better life choices, including not doing drugs or entering into promiscuous behaviors. (There are too many options to cite, but do an online search for "family dinner helps kids" and see for yourself; The Family Dinner Project¹ is a great online resource as well.) These same researchers also find that kids report their parents as their first influencers – ahead of friends and teachers! We can and should capitalize on this God-given relationship. Whether your kids are toddlers and you're teaching them the basics of right and wrong and that Jesus loves them or if you are having deep discussions about sexuality, politics, and relationships with older kids, YOU have the wonderful gift of being able to build faith into the life of your child.

¹ thefamilydinnerproject.org



**“ ...we will tell the next generation
the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord,
his power, and the wonders he has done.”**

PSALM 78:4

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

- What did “Family Time” look like in the home you were raised in? Is there anything you want to replicate?
- What might keep you from being intentional to pass the faith at home? How can you overcome it?