

Notes from CONNECT TO FAMILY Session



Faith thrives when:

- Family and whānau are intentional about faith formation in their homes
- Churches actively support family and whānau in their vital role of forming the faith of their children and young people
- The church operates as the family of God, and becomes a positive spiritual family for all
- Church programmes and services for children and young people connect with their wider families
- There is a positive partnership between the church and home, where families can serve and contribute to church life.

Quotes

‘The family is the most important arena for a child’s spiritual development and soul care. Even families who never attend church nor consider issues of spirituality and ethics in their decision making are spiritually forming their children. They are teaching their children that these things don’t matter in the same way that families who do seek out lives of faith teach their children that these things do matter.’ *Ivy Beckwith*

And:

‘Almost without exception, those young people who are growing in their faith as adults were teenagers who fit into one of two categories:

- They came from families where Christian growth was modelled in at least one of their parents, or
- They had developed significant connections with an extended family of adults within the church.

How often they attended youth events (including Sunday School and discipleship groups) was not a good predictor of which teens would, and which would not, grow toward Christian adulthood.’

Mark DeVries writes in his book Family-Based Youth Ministry:

Discipleship in the ordinary bits of life

Listen, Israel! The LORD our God is the only true God. So love the LORD your God with all your heart, soul, and strength. Memorize his laws and tell them to your children over and over again. Talk about them all the time, whether you're at home or walking along the road or going to bed at night, or getting up in the morning. Write down copies and tie them to your wrists and foreheads to help you obey them. Write these laws on the door frames of your homes and on your town gates. Deuteronomy 6:4-9

- Helping parents find God in the ordinary, everyday boring bits of life
- Ministry leaders aren't there for that
- Handing back the authority to parents to disciple their children

God smart v God connected

- What are we asking parents to disciple their children into?
- God smart - knows the right Christian answers, know how to do Christianity, but it stops in their head.
- God-connected – has a vibrant two-way relationship with God, sharing life with him knowing they are loved.
- Helping parents help their children discover their own connection with God

Vision vs skills

- Don't rush to give activities and resources
- Parents already feel overwhelmed with life
- Parents want to disciple but don't know what it looks like in their child

Harvey Norman vs the Dentist

- The dentist tells us what we should be doing to have a healthy mouth
- Harvey Norman lay out the options and let you choose what works for you
- Get rid of "shoulds" when dealing with parents
- Help parents celebrate the uniqueness of their family and their children
- Once parents have ideas about what spirituality looks like for their child and family, we can provide activities and resources to try

Resources

Parenting for Faith

<https://www.parentingforfaith.brf.org.uk/>

- Equipping parents to raise God connected children and teens in the every day
- Free parenting course
- Uses 5 key tools – creating windows, framing, unwinding, chat and catch, surfing the waves
- All tools can be used for all ages, no matter where in their faith journey they are
- Recommended Rachel Turner books (available through Book Depository, Amazon, Kindle)
 - Parenting Children for a Life of Faith
 - It Takes a Church to Raise a Parent
 - Parenting as a Church Leader
- The Parenting for Faith podcast available on iTunes, Spotify

The Kitchen Table Project

www.kitchentable.org.uk

- Inspiring faith that lasts for all ages
- What builds faith? Loving home, being real, belonging to a faith community, being intentional in connecting with God, praying for your family
- Free downloadable Inspire session - a small group discussion about how to build faith in our children.
- Big Scrumptious Faith Filled feast – a way to tell the next generation about Jesus either at home or as a church event.

Faith5

<https://faithink.com/the-faith5-steps>

<https://www.focusonthefamily.ca/content/faith5-a-simple-routine-that-boosts-faith-formation-in-kids>

- A simple routine that boots faith formation in children
- Uses 5 simple steps:
 - Share a high or low of the day
 - Read a bible verse or story together
 - Talk about how that verse or story might apply to your highs or lows
 - Pray for the highs and lows
 - Bless one another