

Core Values: Healthy Homes

Lifeway Christian Study: Top 10 Issues Facing Families

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| 10. Materialism | 9. Balance of work and home |
| 8. Negative media influence | 7. Lack of communication |
| 6. Financial pressures | 5. Lack of discipline |
| 4. Absence of father figure | 3. Busyness |
| 2. Divorce | 1. Anti-Christian culture |

How can our church help you as a spouse, parent, and child?

The Root RVA Family Ministry: The process of intentionally and persistently coordinating the ministry's proclamation and practices so that parents are acknowledged, trained, and held accountable as primary *disciple-makers* in their children's lives. Likewise, spouses are expected to pursue and enjoy the higher calling of biblically loving each other under the teaching and with the support of a caring, transparent community of believers.

Sounds easy and exciting, but why is it so difficult to achieve?

Jeremiah 17:9- The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately sick; who can understand it?

Our heart if not directed, will lead us astray. Accountability, biblical sharpening, and encouragement from a community are essential components to keep us close to God.

Biblical Love= Act of the will (choice- lead with the will) accompanied by emotion (not void of emotion, but not led by emotion) which leads to action on behalf of its object- Voddie Baucham

Let's Start with Parenting:

As parents, seeking to love our children, we are called to:

1. Prioritize our Calling

God's Purpose for the home is the same as God's purpose for the church:

- Enjoy God's Grace
- Exalt God's Glory
- Extend God's Gospel

How do we live such lives in the face of such immense pressures facing the family?

Colossians 1:28-29

"toil"- difficult work

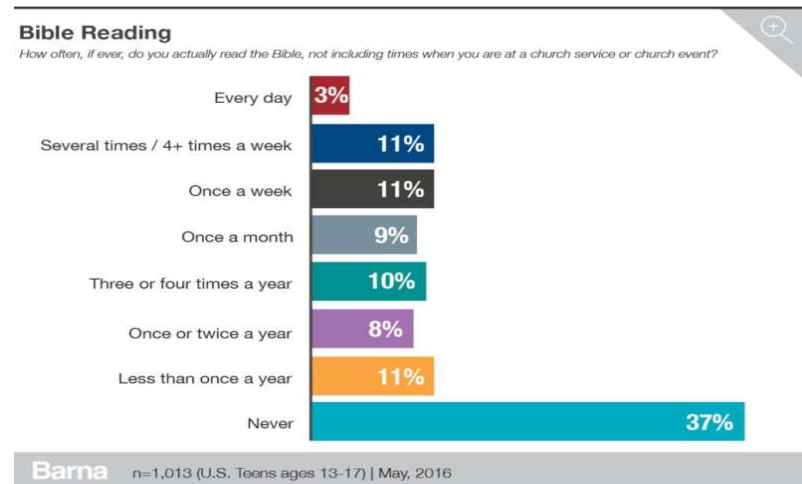
"His energy" –energized by the hard work because we see the eternal value

Illustration: Shoes- You can tell a lot about a child by their shoes. This is a reminder that we are teaching unique creations with distinctive personalities, interests, gifts, and desires. You cannot implement a cookie cutter approach to parenting. You must invest uniquely in your children.

The goal is always changed lives for Christ, not personal goals and wishes for our children. We are imprinting the nature of God on them. *We want to leverage these children's lives for the kingdom of God*

How important is it to invest in our kids?

- Only 10% of all believers come to faith after the age of 18.
- Our kids will not drift towards commitment without our active involvement.



- Our kids will be parents one day. This is legacy living. 10-15% of adults say they have experienced some type of family worship in the home. Fewer than 1/20 have any Bible study or devoted prayer time in the home. Our kids cannot give what they don't have.

2. Promote Godly Character

Joel Prusak was an employee at Dairy Queen. One day, as he was serving customers their food, he noticed that a blind man had dropped a twenty-dollar bill on the floor. A lady standing in line quietly bent down and put the

twenty dollars into her own pocket. Young Joey approached the lady, asking her to give the twenty-dollar bill back to the blind man. She refused claiming it was her \$20. And then Joey did something not many people would do. He opened up his own wallet and handed the blind man a twenty-dollar bill of his own. The man took the money gratefully, and the Dairy Queen resumed normal business. A customer in line observed the whole episode and sent an e-mail to the Dairy Queen management, informing them of Joey's integrity. The DQ management then posted about it on Facebook, and the event went viral. A couple of days later, Joey received a call from the billionaire Warren Buffet, a big investor in Dairy Queen. He thanked Joey for showing such integrity and asked him to come to the next Dairy Queen investors' meeting because he lived out one of their core values as a company—*integrity*. *Ken Costa, Know Your Why, (Thomas Nelson, 2016)*

Buffet said, ***“In looking for people to hire, look for three qualities: integrity, intelligence, and energy. And if they don’t have the first one, the other two will kill you.”***

Psalm 101:2- I will ponder the way that is blameless. Oh when will you come to me? I will walk with integrity of heart within my house;

Parents must demonstrate character as they seek to foster it in their children. Your commitment to not compromise even in the small matters will encourage and train your children to do the same. If you do fail, confession helps our children learn the value of grace.

3. Pursue Increased Competency:

Trying to reach our Children for Christ with only church programs is like pedaling a bike with one pedal; it's also like giving only vitamins to children who need far more to grow and mature in the faith. The church should invest in those people who have been given jurisdiction as the primary faith developers.

David Wilkens:

Define Parents as the primary disciple-makers

Develop Parents by involving them in the training process

Direct Parents by sharing and communicating the needs of the children to the parents (Accountability)

The Bible has given us everything that matters about everything that matters

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all

your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.”-Deuteronomy 6:4-7

4. Practice Together Your Commitment

Proverbs 22:6-

“Train up”- putting something in the mouth to be tasted- literally “to touch the palate” (touch your palate and you will swallow)

“In the way”- implies bending a branch a bow or a river. You can bend a branch much easier when it's young, but when it becomes more mature it becomes more firm, its shape becoming more set.

We create a hunger and thirst in these foundational years by showing them all the time that “Jesus is better.” Practice your faith together!

What temperature does water boil? 212 degrees. At 211 it's hot, but one more degree it begins to boil; a change takes place. What is the one degree more? 1 act of kindness, one Bible lesson, one conversation with a parent, one word of encouragement, one prayer, one service done together?

Conducted by the Fuller Youth Institute (FYI), the project included qualitative and longitudinal quantitative studies of 500 Christian youth group members during the first three years of college following high school graduation. The data, as described in a new book called “Sticky Faith”

- Share organically about your own faith. Your kids will hear you talk about spiritual lessons you are learning.
- Provide an environment for faith exploration. “Doubt in and of itself isn't toxic; it's unexpressed doubt that turns toxic.” We will encourage students and kids to explore their faith and give them freedom to wrestle with real belief. Discussions and questioning is encouraged.
- Connect our sons and daughters to at least five caring, committed adults. Kids are best mentored when they have a web of adults (Statistics show that at least five are needed to be most effective) who support them and care for their spiritual well-being. These adults also live and share lives that are consistent with godly parents.
- Provide a place of encouragement and restoration when our and/or our child's faith fails for a season. Feelings of guilt can cause them to run from their faith and the church, just when they need them the most.

Marriage:

Couples today are more isolated than ever. Often we lack close friends who can speak into our lives or with whom we can compare our struggles and find the encouragement we need to persevere in the face of the immense challenges of marriage.

- We will connect marriage to the discipleship process. Every discipleship process should be connected to our homes. We all need the support and accountability network to strengthen our resolve to love our spouses, learn to emulate what we see in others, and discipline ourselves to maintain our focus on the Lord and on the health of our relationships. The Word that transforms us must also transform our relationships.
- Authentic community will help promote authentic marriages. There is no discipleship without relationship. Transparency and spiritual growth in community with other believers can be messy at times if believers can remove the masks of composure they tend to wear so well. We must be willing to acknowledge the weaknesses in our marriages to others without the fear of being condemned. Only trust will produce this transparency that fosters healing and hope.
- People do what you inspect rather than what you expect. Loving each other means more than offering Biblical teaching. Love means offering biblical accountability. We learn together, and we will grow together as we become more and more transparent with one another. We will seek to restore those who are struggling with a spirit of gentleness- *Galatians 6:1*
- There must be intentionality in marriage training. Just because people know biblical principles doesn't mean they know how to apply those principles to their lives, including marriages, family life, or work relationships. Through Gospel Communities we will establish initiatives to live life with one another more than for an hour a week. We will share meals together, date nights together, biblical studies together. What we do in Gospel Communities can encourage us to be better spiritual partners at home.
- We will fight the spiritual battle in spiritual warfare together through prayer. Prayer support cannot be understated. Corporate prayer unites us in the battle for our hearts and our homes.

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. ²⁴Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

²⁵Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.- Ephesians 5:22-27

How are we to do this?

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. ²And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.- Ephesians 5:1