

family discipleship

*Helping families own the spiritual
development of the next generation*

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.
⁵ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and
with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶ These
commandments that I give you today are to be on
your hearts. ⁷ Impress them on your children. Talk
about them when you sit at home and when you
walk along the road, when you lie down and when
you get up. ⁸ Tie them as symbols on your hands
and bind them on your foreheads. ⁹ Write them on
the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

DEUTERONOMY 6:4-9 NIV

PURPOSE OF THIS RESOURCE

The purpose of this resource is to equip families with vision and practical tools for discipling their children within the home. It highlights the crucial role families of all types play in shaping the spiritual growth of the next generation.

WHAT IS FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP?

Fellowship Bible Church was founded on the desire to produce and release spiritual leaders who know and express the authentic Christ to the world. As a leader and a parent, your priority opportunity to produce and release spiritual leaders within your own home. Whether you recognize it or not, you are already leading your home in a spiritual direction. However well-trained (or ill-equipped) you may feel, your children are watching and listening to you as they form their ideas of the world, God, and their identity. At its core, family discipleship is the necessary and mostly ordinary spiritual leadership of your home. As a parent who follows Jesus, your daily task with your kids is to “bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4b). Jesus lived out discipleship and commands his disciples to follow in his footsteps.

Not only is leading your family to be friends and followers of Jesus a command, it is a privilege! God has given Christian parents no greater calling than to point their kids to Jesus.

discipleship defined

- The lifelong process of following Jesus to become like him
- Involves transferring life and truth in an authentic relationship
- Aims to release disciple-makers of Jesus

misconceptions about family discipleship

Before we begin, let's be clear about what family discipleship is NOT.

Family Discipleship is NOT reserved for the “theologically advanced”.

Discipleship is about simple truths, time, and consistency—not fancy words or degrees.

Family Discipleship is NOT about the dos and don'ts.

As a parent, your end goal should not be to just raise well-behaved kids, but kids who authentically love Jesus and want to follow him.

Family Discipleship is NOT a way to guarantee your child's salvation.

No matter how eloquent or persuasive you are, it is ultimately the moving of the Holy Spirit within a child's heart to turn them toward Jesus.

Family Discipleship is NOT something God expects you to do alone.

The church and your community are here to support and walk alongside you as you teach your kids what it looks like to know and follow Jesus.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT FAMILY?

The physical family is one of the foundational building blocks to human society. God created Adam and Eve as a family unit, for it was not good for man to be alone! They enjoyed perfect fellowship with their Creator and were commanded to be fruitful and multiply and steward the earth (Gen. 1:28). God graciously allowed mankind to co-rule with Him, have children, reflect His image to all creation, and to do so for His glory! All of this was uniquely designed by God to take place through families, primarily in two ways:

1. God created the family to teach us who He is and what He does.

We can learn so much about who God is through His design of the family unit -- namely, the relational nature of God and how He relates to His children.

- All throughout the Bible, God uses familial language to teach us about His grace, love, power, and wisdom (Ephesians 1:5; Ephesians 5:1; Psalm 103:13).
- Our physical families are a reflection of the eternal family of God, comprised of all believers everywhere (Revelation 7:9).
- When we are born physically, we are given a physical family, but when we are “born again”, we are born into the family of God (John 3:3). “But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12).

2. God's highest priority for believing parents is to help their kids know, follow, and trust in Him.

God intended for parents to have tremendous influence in the life of their child. God commands parents to raise up their children, teaching them His truths so that they would know Him (Psalm 78:4-7; Ephesians 6:4). "Let each generation tell its children of your mighty acts; let them proclaim your power." (Ps. 145:4)

Salvation and spiritual growth are only possible by God's grace (1 Corinthians 3:6). Parents are called to rely on the Spirit of God in order to point their children to the gospel (Proverbs 3:5-6; Galatians 5:25).

what is the gospel?

The gospel literally means *good news*. This good news is that through faith alone in Jesus we can be saved from sin, born again, and experience new life in Christ! Jesus is ushering in the kingdom of God and has adopted us into His eternal family.

THE ROLE OF FAMILY IN DISCIPLESHIP

God chose family as **the** unit to display him to the world. God has chosen **you** to be the one to point your children to Jesus. What a gift. Remember, it is in our **fully** flawed humanity and not our perfection where God chooses to shine his power, goodness, and love to the next generation.

How did your family play a role in your spiritual growth?

THE ROLE OF CHURCH IN DISCIPLESHIP

The role of the church is to come alongside families with love, support, accountability, and prayer. The church community adds additional voices of truth and wisdom to strengthen and supplement.

How has the church played a role in your spiritual growth?

SO WHAT NOW?

What does Family Discipleship LOOK like?

CONSISTENT MODELING PG. 14

Modeling is an imperfect but consistent demonstration of an authentic journey of faith.

CAPTURE MOMENTS PG. 16

Leveraging ordinary moments to connect everyday ups and downs to gospel truths.

SO WHAT NOW?

What does Family Discipleship LOOK like?

CREATE TIME PG. 18

Building space into the structures and routines of daily life to direct conversations, thoughts, and actions to the truth of the gospel.

CELEBRATE MILESTONES PG. 20

Making and celebrating occasions to honor significant acts of God's faithfulness in the life of the family.

consistent modeling

These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts.

DEUTERONOMY 6:7 NIV

Modeling includes consistency but not perfection. When we live out our relationship with Jesus *and* a heart of repentance, we demonstrate a real authentic journey of faith.

This is a call for us examine our own spiritual health before we consider the spiritual health of our family. This is not to bring shame, but conviction from God. Before we can ask who we want our children to become, we must pause and ask: Who are we desiring to become?

“Kids need to see their parents struggle with answers, face their weaknesses, deal with real problems, admit when they are wrong, fight for their marriage, resolve personal conflict.”

-Reggie Joiner

**IF PARENTS DON'T MAKE IT PERSONAL,
IT MAY NEVER BE PERSONAL TO THEIR KIDS.**

PRACTICAL STEPS

- Study your Bible in front of your kids and talk about what you are learning.
- Pray often. This can be at mealtimes, bedtime, or simply as things come up throughout the day. Short prayers of gratitude or request help to re-center our focus on Jesus.
- Fight to spend time in gospel-centered community. This allows your kids to experience the joy of loving and serving others.
- Model what it looks like to worship. Sing a worship song your kids know together in the car, or spend time exploring and naming ways you see God's creativity while on a walk.

capture moments

Leveraging ordinary moments to connect everyday ups and downs to gospel truths

Capturing and leveraging moments to apply biblical truth to your present circumstances

Impress them on your children.

DEUTERONOMY 6:7A NIV

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What are foundational truths of scripture you want to repeat daily/ often?
2. What are the attributes of God that you want your kids to know without a doubt?
3. How will you plan to create family discipleship moments in everyday circumstances?
4. How, when, and where does prayer make it into these conversations?

MOMENT	ENCOURAGEMENT	SCRIPTURE
When your child is scared	Remind them that God is always with them	Isaiah 41:10

create time

Building space into the structures and routines of daily life to direct conversations, thoughts, and actions to the truth of the gospel.

Creating time is not adding time to your day; it is simply being intentional with the time you have already been given.

Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

DEUTERONOMY 6:7 NIV

ideas

DAILY

- Waking
- Mealtimes
- Family devotions
- Play and fun!
- Car time
- Bedtime

WEEKLY

- Worship Gathering
- Sabbath rest
- Sports and activities
- Group gatherings
- Weekly Family Night
- Chores and cleaning

MONTHLY

- Serving as a family
- One-on-one time with kids
- Guys night or girls night
- Neighborhood gatherings

ANNUALLY

- Family camps/retreats
- Holidays
- Vacations

**DESIGN WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP
TIMES TO LOOK LIKE FOR YOUR FAMILY.**

DAILY?

WEEKLY?

MONTHLY?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What are your daily and weekly rhythms as a family?
2. Is there anything that should be taken out of your schedule that gets in the way of family discipleship?
3. What do you have in place now in the rhythms of life to help your kids know, follow, and trust in God?
4. How can you leverage your family's passions and interests to connect with God?
5. How can you stay committed to family discipleship times so that they are consistent, thoughtful, and intentional?

celebrate milestones

Making and celebrating occasions to honor significant acts of God's faithfulness in the life of the family.

Deuteronomy 6:9 says: "Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates." There are many moments in our lives where God's faithfulness shines. Remembering and cherishing these milestones is an essential part of family discipleship.

GROWING UP, HOW DID YOUR FAMILY CELEBRATE DIFFERENT MILESTONES?

EXAMPLES TO CONSIDER

Birthdays:
Share how wonderfully they were made

Holidays:
Make a tradition to serve together somewhere

Anniversaries:
Celebrate God's gift of marriage

Rites of Passage:
Baby dedications, graduations, etc

**MOVING FORWARD WHICH MILESTONES DO YOU
WANT TO COMMEMORATE?**

HOW DO YOU WANT TO CELEBRATE THEM?

YOUR FAMILY IDEAS

FAMILY TRADITIONS	
FAMILY ADVENTURES	
IDEA FOR GIFTS OR MEMENTOS	
IDEA FOR BIRTHDAYS/ ANNIVERSARIES	
OTHER IDEAS	

EARLY CHILDHOOD RESOURCES:***Read with your child:***

God Made all of me by Justin Holcomb, Lindsey Holcomb
Big theology for little hearts - (series) by Devon Provencher
The Garden, the Curtain and the Cross, by Carl Laferton
Baby Believer (series) by Danielle Hitchen
For the Bible Tells Me So (series) by Kristen Wetherell
Tiny Theologians (series) by Amy Gannett

For Parents:

Habits of the Household by Justin Whitmel Earley
Risen Motherhood by Emily Jensen & Laura Wifler
Raising Good Humans by Hunter Clarke Fields

ELEMENTARY RESOURCES:***Read with your child:***

Good Pictures Bad Pictures by Kristen A Jenson
God... Should I Be Baptized? by Laurie Donahue
 The Daily Grace CO. (thedailygrace.com)
You Are Not Alone by Jennie Allen

For Parents:

The Cure & Parents by Bill Thrall
Family Discipleship: Leading your Home through Time, Moments & Milestones by Matt Chandler & Adam Griffin
Parenting: Getting it Right by Andy & Sandra Stanley
Tech-Wise Family by Andy Crouch

FSM RESOURCES:***Any of these resources can be done together or separately:***

The Anxious Generation by Johnathan Haidt
Gentle and Lowly by Dane Ortlund
Multiply by Francis Chan
Practicing the Way by John Mark Comer
Seamless by Angie Smith
Women of the Word by Jen Wilkin
Praying Like Monks, Living Like Fools by Tyler Staton
The Basics-Simple & Reproducible Tools for Discipleship
 by Steve Shadrach (campusministry.org)

BY AGE GROUP

YOUNG CHILDREN:

- The Beginner's Bible
- Read With Me Bible
- The Jesus Storybook Bible

ELEMENTARY:

- K-2nd - The Biggest Bible Storybook, One Big Story Bible Storybook
- 3rd-4th - Adventure Bible
- 5th-6th - NIV Teen Study Bible (Zondervan)

TEENAGERS:

- NIV Journaling Bible (Zondervan)
- NIV Study Bible (Zondervan)
- ESV Journaling Bible (ESV Bibles)

All this may seem overwhelming, and that's OK! Before you go home and try to implement all of this, remember – **START SMALL**. This isn't about making sweeping changes to what you're already doing – you'll only be overwhelmed and frustrated. Try implementing one or two simple strategies over the next couple of weeks. If that goes well, slowly add more!

REMEMBER THESE THREE TRUTHS:

1. YOU ARE NOT ALONE

God is with you and he is for you. You also have a church and a community of believers who want to support you and walk alongside you.

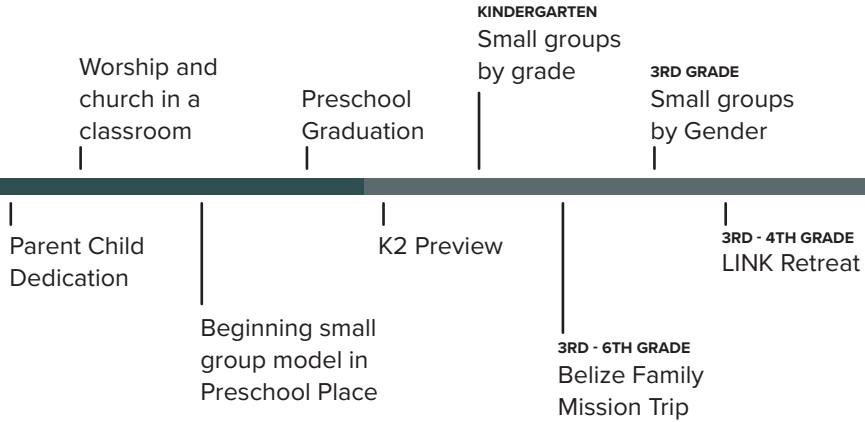
2. DON'T BE AFRAID

God has called you to raise your children to know and follow him, but he has also graciously given his Holy Spirit to equip you and lead you as you lead your child. You are the best parent you can be when you are connected to Him.

3. GOD SAYS HE WILL DO IT

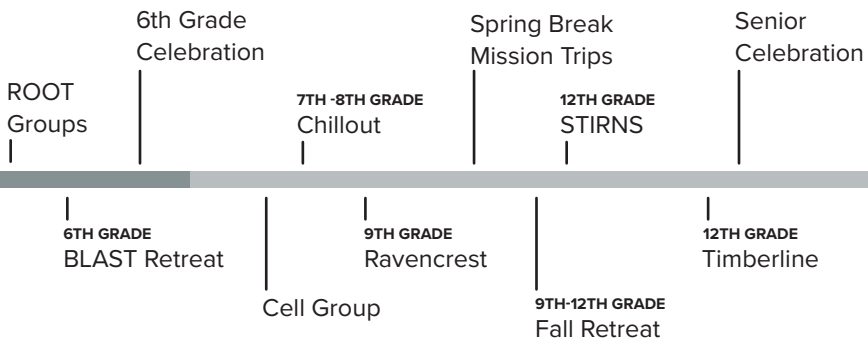
You and I don't have the power to bring lasting change in our lives and our family. Consider 1 Thessalonians 5:24: "The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it."

BIRTH



other church milestone opportunities

- Family Camp
- Lent/Advent Devotionals
- Family Worship
- Parent Day
- Baptism
- Communion
- Becoming a Student Leader



GRADUATION

EARLY CHILDHOOD

ELEMENTARY

5TH -6TH GRADE

FSM

