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PARENTING TOOL BOX



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Spiritual Parenting:
An Awakening for Today's Families
By: Dr. Michelle Anthony

Becoming a Spiritually Healthy Family:
Avoiding the 6 Dysfunctional Parenting Styles
Dr. Michelle Anthony

Raising a Modern-Day Knight:
A Father's Role in Guiding His Son to Authentic Manhood
By: Robert Lewis

Generation iY:
Our Last Chance to Save Their Future
By: Tim Elmore

Parenting
14 Gospel Principles That Can Radically Change Your Family
By: Paul David Tripp



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PARENTING TOOL BOX

PRACTICAL TOOLS AND APPLICATIONS FOR PARENTS

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THE JOURNEY

No matter what you hear, no journey of parenthood ever begins with the perfect plan. In most cases, parents try to figure it out as they go or approach it with a community consisting of grandparents, older siblings with kids, a church community or the wise neighbor down the street. Dealing with instances in real-time may work from time to time, but it's the foundational structure and maintenance that will prevail over a lifetime of parenting children God has entrusted you with.

As parents we can sometimes find ourselves in categories that can blind us to the big God picture for our children. We can entrench ourselves into having kids with perfect behavior, kids that excel in academics or athletics.

"It's hard enough to train kids to behave, but good behavior isn't what Jesus calls for in the Bible. He wants hearts and souls that are shaped in vibrant faith and love toward God and others."

- Dr. Michelle Anthony

As with our own spiritual journey, you can attest to the fact that "things click" with Jesus when you make the decision to approach your faith with your heart first.

This booklet is designed to give a glimpse of methods, tools and resources that you can utilize as an intentional parent, to not only help your children to excel, but to thrive in their spiritual journey which in turn will yield fulfillment that is completely outside the realm of achievements.

Hope you enjoy and find this content useful for yourself or as a tool that you can pass on to new or seasoned parents!

SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

It may be a bit daunting but consider the following:

- Teenage girls 13-17 send an average of 4,050 texts per month.
- Teenage boys 13-17 send an average of 2,539 texts per month.
- Twitter users are sending more than two hundred million tweets per day, or roughly, 2,315 per second.
- The Oxford Dictionary word of the year for 2015 wasn't actually a word, it was a pictograph. An emoji to be specific.
- Snapchat users collectively receive 400 million "Snaps" a day.

Social media accounts for a massive amount of communication and entertainment for our student. The task for parenting hasn't gotten any harder over the years, but the challenges you have are radically different and the adjustments to the approaches feels like it is constantly changing.

Surely there is more space, information and wisdom needed than this half sheet can supply. However, it is my prayer that this will help you realize that how you parent in this social media saturated world is important. There should be consideration and thought put into place. Perhaps the greatest advice to be given is that your expectations and guidelines for how you as a family allow the use of social media should be placed in writing. This ensures no room for unmet expectations or dangerous assumptions.

There are great challenges to navigating your guidelines as a parent regarding social media use, but don't forget that there are blessings that social media brings to the table. It has become a means to create some awesome memories and laughter with snapchat filters and has allowed people across the globe to instantly connect when all we had previously were letters. Though the filters are entertaining, we must filter what we say, post or send with the question: Does this bring glory to God? Will this be encouraging to people? Will this hinder my witness? As the saying goes, "with more power comes more responsibility."

RESOURCES

Detweiler, Craig. *IGods: how technology shapes our spiritual and social lives.* Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2014.

DeYoung, Kevin. *Crazy busy: a (mercifully) short book about a (really) big problem.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013.

Elmore, Tim. *Generation iY: our last chance to save their future.* Atlanta, GA: Poet Gardener Publishing, 2010.

Postman, Neil. *Amusing ourselves to death: public discourse in the age of show business.* New York: Viking, 1985.

FOR DAUGHTERS

Sugar and spice and everything nice. Our sweet little girls are truly a gift from God but the world they live in is not often kind or even nice. We as parents are in a war for our daughters' mind, body and soul. Following the Sexual Revolution of the 70s and feminism of the 80s & 90s, is the most recent hype vying for our daughters allegiance. Revised Feminist Ideology—antagonistic to stay at home moms, sexual freedom with no strings attached, self empowerment & independence. Just as Eve was deceived in the garden, many women today have bought into the 'having it all' scheme of the enemy.

We want to pass down godly attributes such as worth, modesty and purity while encouraging our girls to stand firm on God's Word and protect their hearts. This sounds simple enough until peers have a greater influence and wanting to fit in cancels out reason and prior warnings from parents. Constant, loving reminders from birth that our girls' self worth comes from their Identity in Christ, is critical to combat the onslaught of lies from the enemy.

God gives limits as protection but so many kids see the Bible's 'shall nots' as roadblocks to having fun and rebel. We must teach our daughters to follow God's moral standards which are absolute and do not change according to circumstances or the culture. It's also important in having honest dialogue to admit that sin is often very attractive. While bad choices may be fun and feel good for a time, ultimately, they bring pain.

We all have an empty space that only Jesus can fill and girls being emotional creatures often look for love in all the wrong places.

The world's formulas of worth:

What we look like

What we do

What others think of us

God's formula:

God looks at the heart

God offers grace

God offered His Son for us

SPIRITUAL PARENTING

There is a spiritual lie that many of us have bought into. Many Christian parents with the best intentions operate from the belief that we create a spiritual life for our children by managing their behavior.

Our true goal as spiritual parents is to usher in a vibrant, transforming faith.

- *For our children to hear God's voice and know it is God*
- *That our children will desire to obey God's voice*
- *That they will obey through the power of the Holy Spirit*

Faith is the ONE THING Christ is looking for upon His return so it is the most important thing to demonstrate and cover in prayer for our children.

Our kids need to know we struggle as well. We are living as aliens here on earth and many times we are called to stand firm.

Our approach to Spiritual Parenting is also vital in being affective. When we make the decision to increase our intentionality in our children's spiritual journey, we must ponder and comprehend the basics:

- *We are Stewards of the children, entrusted to us by their creator*
- *We must lead ourselves [spiritually] so that we can lead others*
- *We must lead our families [both Father and Mother] should participate in this journey as a family.*
- *We must continually clarify roles and expectations so that no one is operating based on assumptions.*

Lastly, you are not alone in this effort. Seek community, collaboration and support within your church and circle of like hearted & minded believers.

Courtney, Vicki {Your Girl: Raising a Godly Daughter in an Ungodly World}

McDowell, Josh {Beyond Beliefs to Convictions}

SPRITUALLY ~~HEALTHY~~ FAMILY

Our culture hands off responsibilities to so many others when it comes to parenting. We hand off kids to coaches for sports, to teachers for education, all of which are good and fruitful. Yet what are the responsibilities of parenting that cannot be handed off? When we hand off the responsibilities of parenting to others, what do you lose in functioning as a family unit?

There are so many rhythms that get pressed upon your kids, but the ones of utmost value are how you both teach and model worship, prayer, and faithfully following Jesus day to day. Jonathan Edwards once said, “Every Christian family ought to be as it were a little Church.” You as a family unit have the responsibility and the joy to be your kid’s first and primary example of following Jesus. And when you think about it, your role is simply following Jesus, by specifically letting your kids in on how you follow Jesus. By praying with your kids you are teaching them how to communicate and foster an intimate relationship with him. By doing worship together, you show that our adoration of Jesus is not confined to Sunday morning. So much of parenting is allowing room for you to let your kids in on your walk with the Lord.

A brief encouragement and caution to moving forward with this activity as a family. Start at a reasonable pace, maybe it is beginning with praying together as a family, then adding to it over time. As with most rhythms of life, establish a set time and place for this to take place. We establish times and locations for watching football games, practices, Friendsgiving's, etc. It is important to be intentional and protective of this newfound rhythm. The following resources are books that we think might be helpful in equipping you for family worship, family discipleship.

RESOURCES

Anthony, Michelle. *Spiritual Parenting: An Awakening for Today's Families*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2010.

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Life Together*. New York: Harper & Row, 1954.

Helopoulos, Jason. *A Neglected Grace: Family Worship in the Christian Home*. Fearn, Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2013.

Whitney, Donald S. *Family Worship*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016

FOR SONS

Scripture and our culture paint a very conflicting image/role of boys becoming men. Culture associates certain endeavors or achievements with entering man-hood, where scripture focuses on wisdom and a character rooted in Jesus.

In his book “Parenting” Paul David Tripp speaks of 5 simple yet profound points of parenting. I believe that this is just as applicable in a father’s approach in raising his son/s.

True north in everyone’s journey as Christians must be the applied notion that WE ARE HIS AMBASSADORS. We represent HIM in all contexts of life, relationships, work etc. When we shift our life focus from us and onto HIM, prioritizing HIM becomes that much natural.

Secondly, what can get in our way? Sin! Sins and the potential of sins must be open discussion. You must foster and nurture an environment where your sons can admit their mistakes fully knowing that with consequences [applied or natural] there is love, grace and restoration to follow. Fear of being rejected is a leading cause of deceptive behavior that will become more harmful with age for your sons and you as parents.

Third, we must know and communicate our inability. We can’t forcefully change our sons hearts, but this notion should be liberating, and this relief is simultaneously prayer-inducing since gospel-minded parents become dependent parents, dependent on the Lord to do what only he can.

Fourth, the question of “Who are we parenting?” needs to be answered. It’s a simple truth but profound and consequential for our perspective as parents: We’re raising worshipers. The hearts of our children have loves, and what our children love will determine what they worship. What they worship will then determine what they do. For the parent, being “an instrument of change means getting at worship issues with your child” (p.150).

Lastly, who do we have? Immanuel! Even though the passage in Matthew 28:18-20 may not seem like a parenting verse, view it this way; Your calling as a mom or dad is to “do everything within your power, as an instrument in the hands of the Redeemer who has employed you, to woo, encourage, call, and train your children to willingly and joyfully live as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ” (p.184). Nothing matters more.