

Parenting Beyond Your Capacity

Connect your
family to a wider
community

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Book Summary

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Connect your family to a wider community

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The Orange Parent

“A parent’s influence is best realized in partnership with the church.”

Parenting priorities – nurturing critical connections

- What matters more than anything is that my kids have an authentic relationship with God.
- My wife and I are not the only adult influences my children need.
- My children need to know that I will never stop fighting for a right relationship with them.
- My relationship with God and with my wife affects my children more than I realize.
- Just being together can never substitute for interacting together in a meaningful way.

No one has more potential to influence your child than you.

- You are the primary influence in the life of your child.
- Teachers, pastors and coaches will never have as much potential to influence a child’s character, self-esteem, perspectives, or faith as a parent does.
- That teacher pastor or coach will have influence that is temporary, your influence as a parent will be permanent.
- Your relationship gives you the potential to influence in ways that others cannot.

You are not the only influence your children need.

- When you learn to parent beyond your capacity, you tap into other influences that also have the potential to impact your children’s future.

- You can leave your children alone to discover random influences who will shape their character and faith, or you can help them proactively pursue strategic relationships for their lives.

Two combined influences will make a greater impact than just two influences.

If they work together they can potentially make a greater impact than if they work alone.

Parenting Values

Widen the Circle

Invite others to invest in your children, so that your sons and daughters have other voices that help shape and determine the direction of their lives.

- The time will come when your child needs another trusted adult who would give them a safe place to wrestle with difficult issues.
- You need someone who will be another voice, saying the kind of things you would try and say as a parent.
- Moses told all of Israel to listen in Deut. 6. It was a community of aunts, uncles, grandparents and other adults.
- The church has huge potential to provide community for children. Research tell us that teens who had at least one adult from church make a significant time investment in their lives . . . were more likely to keep attending church and that the more adults the better.

- This community gives them a sense of belonging and significance.
- It allows mentors to DO ministry with the child and serve with them.
- Widen this circle as early as possible *before* children need them so that they will be there *when* they need them.

Key Question: *How am I connecting my child to a wider circle of influence?*

Imagine the End

Focus your energy and effort on the issues that matter most and will make a lasting impact.

- It is more important to leave a legacy of faith rather than an inheritance of wealth.
- Moses said everything I have said and everything I will say hinges on one essential truth: our God is God. Everything is really about Him.
- A child's relationship with God is more important than their relationship with parents. That they would pursue a relationship with God as their highest priority.
- It doesn't mean that you understand everything there is to understand about God, but that you help your kids keep moving in their relationship with Him.

- This involves using whatever limited capacity you have to connect your family to God's unlimited capacity.

Key Question: *What do I want my child to become?*

Fight for the Heart

Create a culture of unconditional love in your home to fuel the emotional and moral health of your children.

- Sometimes it is easy to win an argument and force the right behaviour, but lose the heart in the process.
- Communicate in a style that gives the relationship value.
- Don't fight *with* your children, fight *for* them.
- Moses said to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength." Deut. 6:5
- Moses was warning the people about the danger of passing down rules without the context of a loving relationship.
- If you want to pass on a legacy to the next generation it has to be transferred relationally, in a context of genuine love.
- One of the greatest gifts parents can give to their children is simply to prove that they can be trusted over the long haul.
- **Don't:** discipline in anger; use words that communicate rejection; ignore their voices or break core promises.
- Do try to understand who they really are.

Key Question: *How am I fighting for the heart of my child*

Create a Rhythm

Tap into the power of quality moments together, and build a sense of purpose through your everyday experiences.

- Increase the quantity of quality time you spend together.
- Much of daily life consists of repeated patterns of waking up, eating, going out and going to bed.
- Parents need to determine if God is in the normal routines of the home. Is faith just something that happens at church, but not part of day-to-day life?
- We need to be more deliberate and intentional about creating a spiritual rhythm, not a compartmentalised faith.
- Deut 6 talks about impressing faith as we sit at home, walk along the road, lie down and get up. Consider the following ideas:
 - **Eating meals together** is an optimal times to have a focussed discussion. Use a variety of discussion starters, games and activities, before, during or after a meal. Make it natural and fun.
 - **Walking or travelling together** provides a great opportunity for informal dialogue in a nonthreatening environment.
 - **Tucking children into bed** can be a great time to have an intimate conversation and listen to the heart of your child.
 - **Getting up in the morning** provides a blank page for the family to start fresh relationally. Just a few

encouraging words carefully spoken or written can give your children a sense of value and instil purpose.

- Create a rhythm that is fun for your children and that works for your family. Every family will be different.
- Don't be overwhelmed and try to do too much too soon. Even small changes will make a huge difference in the lives of children e.g. start to pray with your child; talk about God at dinner time; read a Bible story.
- Have weekly rhythms where Sabbath is set aside as a day for honouring and worshipping God.

Key Question: *How has spiritual development been part of our family rhythm this week?*

Make It Personal

Put yourself first when it comes to personal growth.

- When it comes to spiritual and character formation, your journey impacts them deeply. If you want it to be in them, it needs to be in you.
- Allow your kids to see how you strive to grow so they can understand how to confront their own limitations and pursue character and faith.
- Let kids see your struggles. They need to see your authenticity and hear your transparency.

- We are not expert parents before we start, but we learn as we go and we make spiritual growth a priority.
- Everyone's spiritual journey will be different and we all grow through different contexts.
- Realize your relationship with God will become more passionate as you become more passionate about how you connect with Him.
- Find a community of friends who you to talk to and learn from.
- Strengthen your relationship with your husband. Don't underestimate the importance of a child seeing a mother and a father engaged in friendship and interacting in an affectionate way.
- Find a personal growth rhythm which works best for you.

Key Question: *Is my relationship with God, growing, authentic and personal?*

As a parent you do have limitations. But that's okay, because there is a really big God and an authentic community waiting to extend capacity far beyond your own.

- ***Create a culture of unconditional love to fuel the emotional and moral health of your children.***
- ***Tap into the power of quality moments together, building a sense of purpose through everyday experiences.***