

INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP OF CHILDREN & TEENS

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No matter how busy we are, we need to make the spiritual discipleship of our children and teens a top priority. Research has shown that many children accept Jesus as their personal Savior before the age of 13. Hence, it is imperative that we nurture the faith of children in this 4/14 age Window. Discipling these youngsters may mean your time, your energy and being intentional in making disciples of our children and teens. Come to this workshop to learn some important principles of discipling children and teens.

Ellen White, *Adventist Home*, p. 320

“Too often children are allowed to grow up without religion because their parents think they are too young to have Christian duties enjoined upon them. . . .”

***Desire of Ages*, p. 515**

“It is still true that children are the most susceptible to the teachings of the gospel; their hearts are open to divine influences, and strong to retain the lessons received. The little children may be Christians, having an experience in accordance with their years. They need to be educated in spiritual things, and parents should give them every advantage, that they may form characters after the similitude of the character of Christ.”

What is at Stake?

- Did you know that 70-75%, youth, and young adults from Christian families are leaving the church each year, never to return?
- Only 9% of all born-again Christians have a biblical worldview.
- The church is permanently losing 75%-94% of children by their second year of college.

By Cathy Lynn Grossman, USA TODAY 2011.

[a prior, 2016 Pew Research Center survey](#)

Christianity Today 2014

What Are God's Dream for Children? Deut. 6

- They be spiritually mentored by their parents
- They love Him with all their hearts
- They obey His commandments.

Four Components to Jesus' Method of Discipleship

There are at least four major components to what Jesus did when He was showing us how to make disciples. He did not just command us to disciple. In addition to the command, He paved the way in showing His followers how to make disciples themselves. Parents, grandparents and pastors who want similar fruit to what Jesus produced will follow His example.

1) Jesus Told His Disciples to Follow Him, While He Showed Them How to Follow God.

Jesus did not tell His disciples to follow other teachers; He warned against "false teachers" and rejected teachers of questionable beliefs.

For parents:

- Come alongside our children to show them how to pray, share Christ, and serve.
- Be a good model.
- Mentor them.
- Give them lots of opportunities to practice their gifts and talent.

Barna's 2019 Households of Faith



2) Jesus Was with His Disciples For the Majority of Most Days.

Jesus was not merely with His disciples in His spare time. Mark 3:14 says *"Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach,..."*

"Quantity Time" is what it takes to build deep relationships.

Jesus spent lots of time with his disciples. The idea of "Quality Time" is one of the great lies of our times; our "microwave" approach to discipleship is not enough. Like Jesus, parents who disciple like Jesus will sacrifice time, careers, hobbies, prestige, money, entertainment and possessions in order to be with their children.

Family Time

- Having regular family worships.
- Studying the Bible and Sabbath School lesson together.
- Enjoying mealtimes and play times.
- Talking and sharing time (no gadgets)

3) Jesus Frequently Taught His Disciples Scripture and Showed Them How to Minister to Others.

Jesus practiced Deuteronomy 6:7 but took it to a new level;

Deuteronomy 6:4-8

"You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."

He frequently taught His disciples scripture each day and showed them how to live. Parents who disciple like Jesus will constantly look for opportunities to pray, to read scripture, to sing hymns and spiritual songs, to talk about the goodness of the Lord, and to show their children how to live through ministry to others

How Do We Teach Them?

- Encourage them to begin a personal relationship with Jesus through daily devotions, prayer and studying of God's Word (TAG).
- Help kids discover their individual gifts and passion for ministry.

- Equip them to share their gifts in serving the church and the community.
- Train them to lead their peers to Jesus.

4) Jesus Send Them Out On A Mission

- Provide opportunities for children to share Jesus with their friends and classmates.
- Show them simple ways to witness.
- Lead them out to serve and minister to others.
- Discuss & debrief.

Challenges Facing Children & Teens Today?

- Internet
- Pornography
- Movies
- Television
- Books & magazines
- Music
- Computer games

How Can Parents Help Their Children Deal with These Challenges?

- Set guidelines and limits for the use of internet, television, Smartphones, or other gadgets.
- Sit down together and watch a video or play a computer game together with your children.
- Always debrief with them, asking questions and answering them.
- Teach them to make wise choices as to what to see, what to read and what to listen to.

What is more important; success or strong disciples who will Impact the world?

BE INTENTIONAL!
Disciple Like Jesus