

Children and Family

November 2019



I have just spent the past three days at the ETCH Family Ministry Conference. ETCH stands for Equipping the Church and Home. I am so blessed to have had the opportunity to listen to some awesome preachers and speakers, to be part of worship surrounded by other ministry people, and to learn so much from the five breakout sessions. I want to share with you one of the many take-aways that I learned. So, please read on....

When a student graduates from high school, there is a high probability that they will be leaving the church as well. 66% of graduating seniors will not go to church after they have graduated high school. The reason that was given is that these students do not feel connected to people of their church. These students WANT to be connected with the other generations in church.

TRUE healthy family ministry not only includes parents and kids. A healthy family ministry is one where ALL the generations are connected. It is important for the older generation to connect with the students and children of the church. The number one indicator of students staying connected is for them to have spiritual mentors who are not their parents. These are the people who can share their story and the time line of how Jesus has been at work in their lives with the students. These are the people who can help a student remain connected to the church.

Out of the 66% of students who say good-bye to church upon graduation, 31% do return. The number one reason that they return is the influence of their parents! Parents, YOU are your child's MAIN influencer. You are your child's MAIN discipler.

Now, what do we do with this information?! Well, if you are a parent who is wondering how to go about discipling their child and would like some assistance, please contact me! This is why I am here—to equip you, to resource you, and to cheer you on! If you are a person who does not have children or students in their home, how can you become a spiritual mentor to one of our students? I do believe that God told His people to repeat the commands to the children in Deuteronomy 6:4-9. It doesn't mention that those children have to live in the same house as the adult who talks about the commands and repeats them. My interpretation is that we are all the family of God, and therefore, we are all responsible in raising up one another to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength."

Please sign up for the Positive Parenting Book Club on November 4 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. The book is *Becoming a Spiritually Healthy Family: Avoiding the Six Dysfunctional Parenting Styles* by Michelle Anthony. "We all want to guide our children into the abundant life that Jesus offers, but when we pursue the 'more' and 'better' life that the world offers above our pursuit of Jesus, we fall into dangerous and subtle dysfunctional parenting habits." At this time, there are a lot of open spots for you to join me! If you don't have time to read the book, come and hear what the book is about. I would love to have a group that night.

It has been a pleasure to work with our new Director of Youth Ministries, Leah Nash. I hope that you have had the chance to say hello and welcome her and her husband, Chris. Leah and I are working on some different events for students in grades 5-12. You will want to stay tuned for more details.

How is it going in your family? How are you inviting God into your daily life? Where can I help? Please don't hesitate to ask questions and to let me know how I can help you and cheer you on!

By HIS Grace and through HIS love,

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