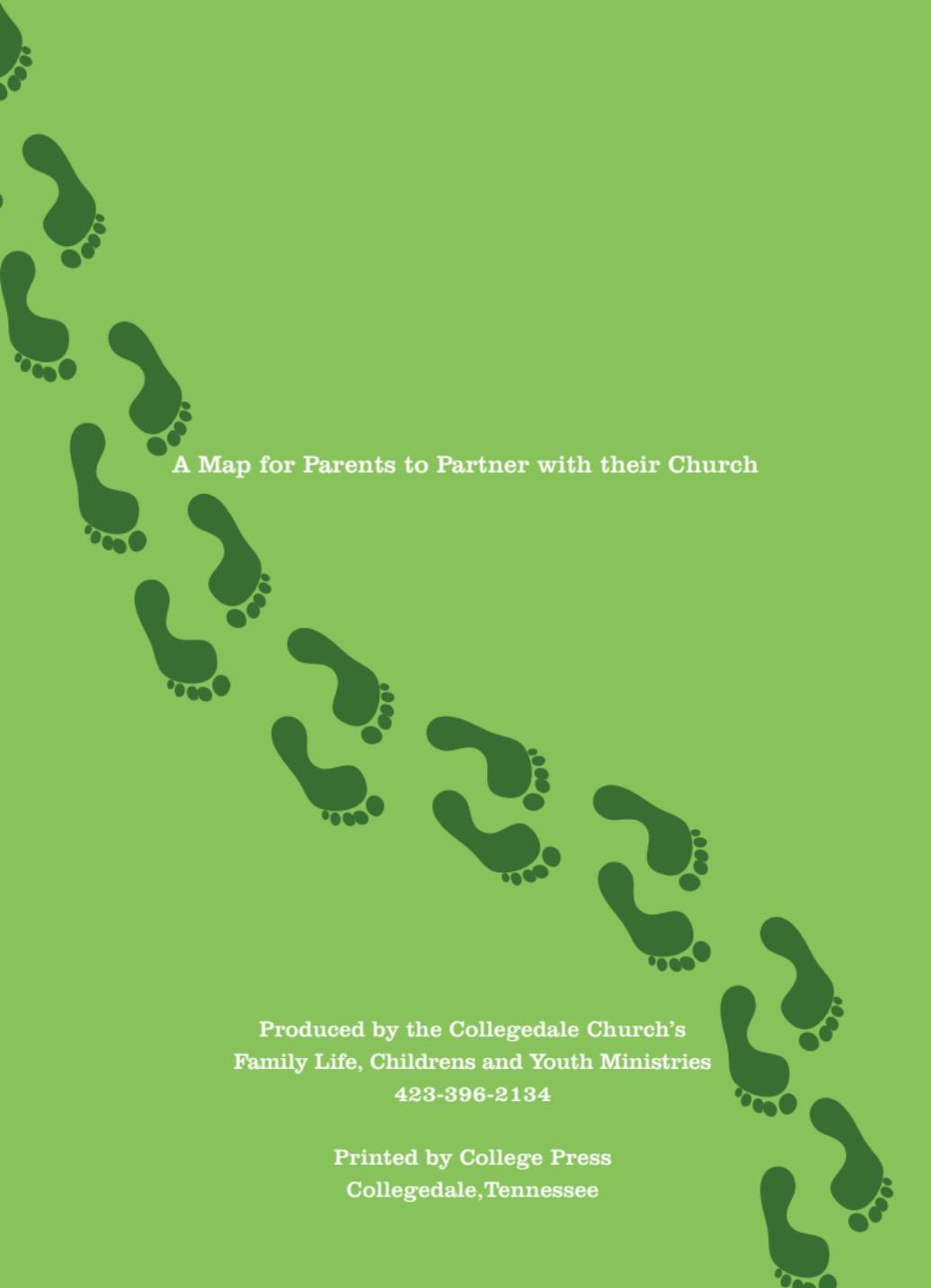


FOLLOWING JESUS



A Map for Parents to Partner with their Church

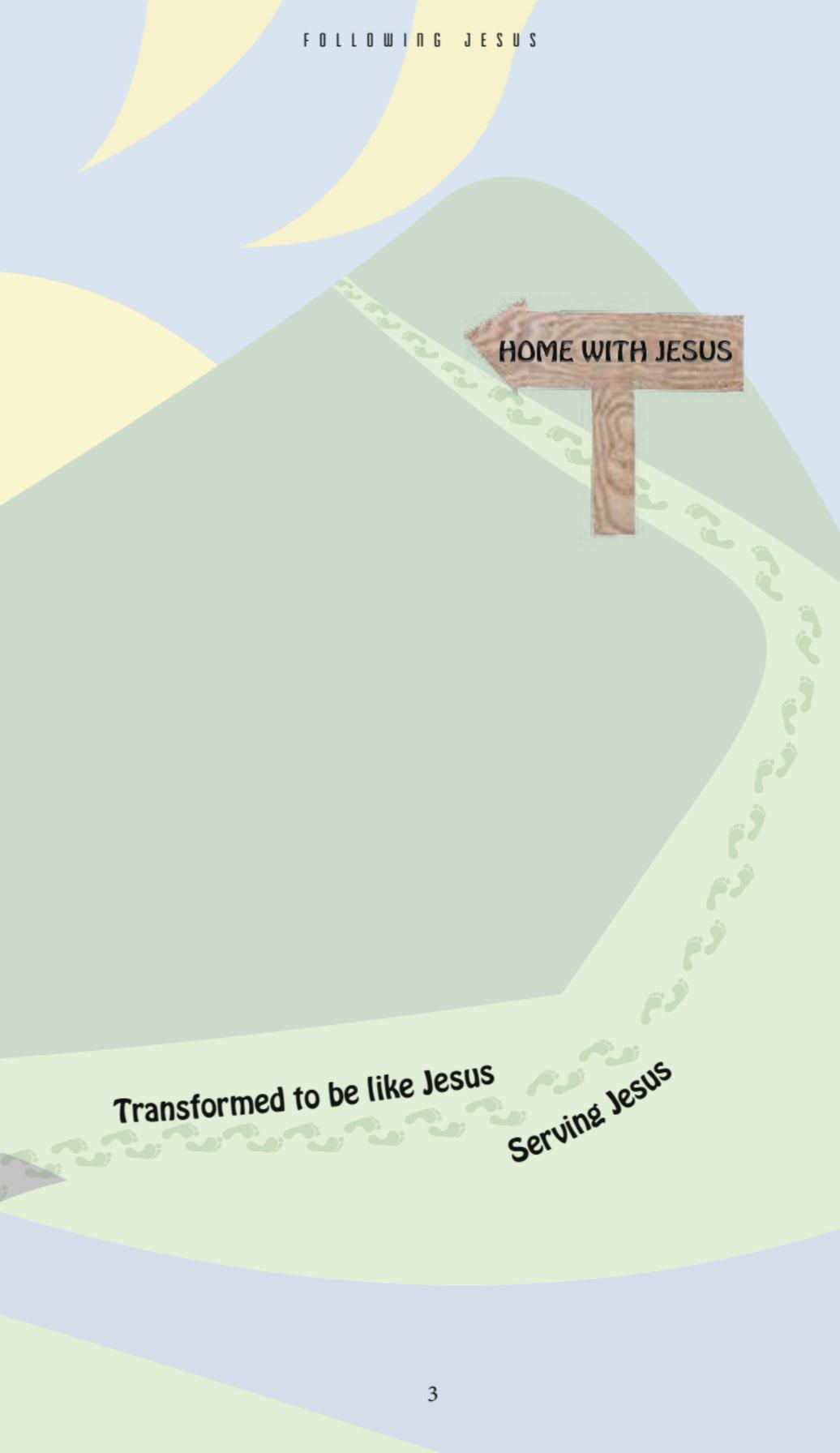
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Your Family Spiritual Growth Map

YOUR JOURNEY
BEGINS HERE

Salvation in Jesus



HOME WITH JESUS

Transformed to be like Jesus

Serving Jesus

Toddlers
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Ages: 3-5 p. 15

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Young Adults
Ages: 18-Independence p. 53

Adult Children p. 59

Welcome!

Your church is eager to partner with you to encourage your child to choose to follow Jesus forever. We are committed to the following:

- 1. Elevate Jesus as the only source of life: abundant and eternal.**
- 2. Provide opportunities to serve Jesus by serving others.**
- 3. Honor each parent as your child's primary spiritual leader.**
- 4. Provide opportunities to connect with other families for support and an example of living for Jesus.**
- 5. Encourage parenting-style transitions as follows:**

Age of Child	Parent Role	Parenting Goal
Birth-2	Servant	Secure child
3-12	Authority	Child independently making positive life skills and moral choices
13-21	Mentor	Child to become an independent adult
Independent Adult	Friend	Friend to child

(Rosemond, 2007, p. 175; *Parenting by The Book*)

- 6. Teach each family member that his/her value as a person comes from God as Creator, Redeemer, and Leader.**
- 7. Teach each family member to love others the way God does.**
- 8. Provide resources for married parents to enjoy a healthy marriage.**
- 9. Teach each family member how to follow Jesus through the temptations of secular culture.**

Here's Our Strategy:

- 1. As parents, pursue a daily transformational walk with Jesus.**
- 2. Your home and the church will partner to provide the best possible influence to encourage your child to choose to follow Jesus forever.**

(Note: Christian education is part of the ministry of the church.)

CULTURAL
INFLUENCES



HOME &
CHURCH
COMBINED



3. Create a “margin” of extra time for each day. It is in this margin of free time that spiritual development can flourish. Provided below are some ideas on how to create this margin:

- Expect the unexpected.
- Create buffer zones.
- Plan free time.
- Learn to say “no”.
- Prune the “activity branches”.
- Practice simplicity and contentment.
- Disconnect from technology for periods of time.
- Embrace a long-term vision and minimize short-term flurry.
- Do the right thing, but do less stuff.
- Enjoy anticipation, relish memories.
- Don’t rush wisdom.

Primary Source: *Margin* by Richard Swenson



**Toddlers
Ages: Birth-3**

Parenting Role: Servant

Parenting Goal: Secure Child

**Spiritual Goal: Teach your child
love, trust, and obedience
through his/her relationship
with you.**

**The foundation for character
is in place by age 3.**

Donna J. Habenicht

Helpful Hints for Home

1. Elevate Jesus as the only source of life: abundant and eternal.

Children's ideas about God begin with their feelings about their parents. Show your love in the following ways:

- Be responsive to your child's needs.
- Listen to your child.
- Stop what you are doing.
- Make eye contact and smile.
- Make appropriate comments.
- Be generous with hugs and kisses.
- Give sincere compliments.
- Forgive and forget.
- Read stories about God's love.
- Connect your love with God's love.

2. Married parents, consistently invest in your marriage as a primary tool to encourage your child to follow Jesus.

(See resources page in back of book.)

3. Teach each family member that his/her value as a person comes from God as his/her Creator, Redeemer, and Leader.

- Maximize the hours in the week a parent is providing childcare.
- Plan to allow your child



to enjoy days filled with physical play as long as possible. Start your child in kindergarten at age 6. If at all possible, avoid preschool and childcare. This sets your child up to excel spiritually and academically and to feel valued.

4. Follow Jesus through the temptations of secular culture.

- Consistently spend time alone with God in Bible reading and prayer.
- Ensure media and toys in your home communicate Christian values.
- Give your child 15 minutes per day of focused attention doing what he/she wants to do.
- Teach specific religious activities:
 - » Decide what religious actions you would like to teach your child.
 - » Do them regularly.
 - » Make learning fun. Pair it with your love.
 - » Pray with your baby as soon as he/she is born and continue to pray together regularly.
- Teach your child in an age appropriate way:
 - » Say exactly what you mean.
 - » Remember your child is a concrete thinker at this age. Avoid symbolism and other abstract concepts.
 - » Teach your child that God is his/her loving Creator and Protector.
 - » Concentrate on one thing at a time.
 - » Nurture your child's natural belief and faith.
 - » Teach positively and clearly.

Don't bring up doubts.

- Develop your child's conscience:
 - » Create strong bonding between infant and parent.
 - » Make reasonable requirements.
 - » Provide compliments for right actions.
 - » Be consistent with do's and don'ts.
 - » Be consistent in consequences for wrong actions.
 - » Be sure consequences fit the misbehavior.
 - » Model desired behavior.
 - » Read scripture and character-building stories.
 - » Express key guidance thoughts frequently.

Primary Source: *How to Help Your Child Really Love Jesus* by Donna J. Habenicht, Ed.D.

- Implement home media management.

“Overstimulation of the brain's pleasure center has the potential to do as much damage as addiction to any major drug. The overstimulation of our pleasure system, as now being experienced through many high-tech gadgets, computers, games, iPods, and so on, actually creates what is called an addiction process—a process that slowly shuts down the brain's pleasure system like a regular addiction” (Hart, 2007, pp. 25-26, *Thrilled to Death*).

- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends the following:

- » For healthy brain, eye, and attention span development, no screen time (TV, computer, phone and other digital devices) when a child is under the age of two.
 - » For children two and over, keep total screen time to under two hours per day.
 - » Keep TV set and Internet-connected electronic devices out of your child's bedroom.
 - » Monitor what media your 2 or 3-year-old child is accessing, including any websites he/she is visiting.
 - » Enforce a mealtime and bedtime "curfew" for media devices.
(<https://www.aap.org>)
- Compliance with the AAP screen time recommendations is vital for healthy spiritual development. Minimal screen time can help children develop an appetite for spiritual things, i.e., family worship, personal devotions, Sabbath School, church, being still and knowing God (Ps. 46:10 NIV); as well as help protect the child's ability to experience pleasure later in life (*Thrilled to Death* by Dr. Archibald D. Hart).
 - Resist the temptation to use media to provide childcare. Non-electronic options such as reading, physical play with toys, board games, and outdoor play are much healthier options (AAP).
 - Ensure music and media content is congruent with Christian morals and values during this highly formative stage of development. Here are

examples of ideas often portrayed in contrast to God's Kingdom:

- » Spiritualism. God clearly instructs against such practices (Dt. 18:10-12).
 - » To follow your heart rather than the rules. God's word says the human heart is deceitful and untrustworthy, and we should follow God's rules for success (Jer. 17:9; Josh. 1:7-8).
 - » Contradictions of Biblical values such as honesty, purity, being a peace maker, speaking noble words, and practicing good health habits are found in music, movies, TV, and cartoons.
- Some video games can shut down the moral control center of the brain, develop an insatiable appetite for excitement, and teach behavior contrary to Scripture. Minimizing the development of an appetite for video games during the early years of your child's life can help avoid significant challenges during the teen years and beyond (<http://littlelightstudios.tv/product-category/battlefieldhollywood/>).
 - Resources:
 - » Christian Media Options
<http://www.christisanbook.com/>
 - » Media reviews from a Christian perspective
<http://www.pluggedin.com/>



**Children
Ages: 3-5**

**Parenting Role:
Authority**

**Parenting Goal:
Child independently makes positive
life skills and moral choices**

Spiritual Goals:

Help your child develop the following:

- Love for Jesus
- Faith relationships with other people
- Strong belief in prayer, faith, and love
- Christian character

**4 and 5-year-olds ask the most
questions about God, death, and the
hereafter than any other age.**

Donna J. Habenicht



Tips for the “Authority” Parenting Role

- Teach your child respect for authority.
- Win decisively by doing the following:
 - » Be consistent.
 - » Follow through on what you say.
 - » Stay the course despite your child’s protests.

Helpful Hints for Home

1. Elevate Jesus as the only source of life: abundant and eternal.

Children’s ideas about God begin with their feelings about their parents. Show your love in the following ways:

- Be responsive to your child’s needs.
- Listen to your child.
- Stop what you are doing.
- Make eye contact and smile.
- Make appropriate comments.
- Be generous with hugs and kisses.
- Give sincere compliments.
- Forgive and forget.
- Read stories about God’s love.
- Connect your love with God’s love.

2. Teach each family member that his/her value as a person comes from God as his/her Creator and Protector.

- Emphasize your child's specialness to God.
- Emphasize your child is still loved and special even when he/she makes mistakes.
- Help your child learn to confess his/her sins and experience forgiveness.
- Maximize the hours in the week a parent is providing childcare.
- Plan to allow your child to enjoy days filled with physical play as long as possible.
- Start your child in kindergarten at age 6. If at all possible, avoid preschool and childcare. This sets your child up to excel spiritually and academically and to feel valued.

3. Teach your child to love others the way God does.

- Communicate clearly and frequently.
- Nurture gently in keeping with your child's needs.
- Consider your child's individual temperament and respect your child's current stage of development.
- Communicate strong disapproval of your child hurting animals or other people.
- Model how to be a caring person.
- Encourage your child to think of himself/herself as a helpful and caring person.
- Limit wardrobe and toys to reasonable amounts. Encourage sharing with others.

4. Provide opportunities for your child to serve Jesus by serving others.

5. Married parents, consistently invest in your marriage as a primary tool to encourage your child to follow Jesus.

(See resources page in back of book.)

6. Follow Jesus through the Temptations of secular culture.

- Consistently spend time alone with God in Bible reading and prayer.
- Protect your child's mind from evil.
- Nurture your child with Christian values.
- Ensure toys in your home communicate Christian values.
- Teach your child in an age-appropriate way:
 - » Say exactly what you mean.
 - » Remember your child is a concrete thinker at this age. Avoid symbolism and other abstract concepts.
 - » Teach your child that God is his/her loving Creator and Protector.
 - » Make learning fun. Pair it with your love.
 - » Use Bible stories to introduce your child to God. Emphasize what the story tells us about God.
 - » Help your child realize God is with him/her through difficulties.
 - » Show your own love and respect for God's Word.
 - » Concentrate on one thing at a time.
 - » Nurture your child's natural belief and faith.
 - » Teach positively and clearly. Don't bring up doubts.
- Teach specific religious activities:
 - » Decide what religious actions you would like to teach your child.
 - » Do them regularly.
- Teach your child to enjoy church:
 - » Sit together in church as a family during childhood and adolescence.
 - » Help your child participate in the church service.

- » Be involved in church activities for children.
- » Train your child how to behave in church. Plan ahead, be patient, and be persistent.
- » Provide an activity bag for your child during the church service.
- » Be an active parent-teacher. Take charge of your child's religious education. Work closely with church leaders to be sure your child gets the best religious education possible.
- Maximize your family's influence:
 - » Eat meals together regularly with no cellphones, TV, etc.
 - » Be interested in what your child is doing.
 - » Cultivate family hobbies and interests. Plan many interesting family activities.
 - » Cultivate your child's friendship.
 - » Give your child 15 minutes of daily focused attention doing what he/she wants to do.
- Teach your child to obey:
 - » Provide clear standards for behavior.
 - » Enforce clear consequences for misbehavior.
 - » Be reasonable.
 - » Respect each family member's individuality.
 - » Provide an emotional climate of warmth and care in the home.
 - » Bless your child often by telling him/her the following:
 - * "I love you"
 - * "I am proud of you"
 - * "You are good at . . ."

Primary Source: *How to Help Your Child Really Love Jesus* by Donna J. Habenicht, Ed.D.

- Implement home media management.

“Overstimulation of the brain’s pleasure center has the potential to do as much damage as addiction to any major drug. The overstimulation of our pleasure system, as now being experienced through many high-tech gadgets, computers, games, iPods, and so on, actually creates what is called an addiction process—a process that slowly shuts down the brain’s pleasure system like a regular addiction”

(Hart, 2007, pp. 25-26, *Thrilled to Death*).

- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends the following:
 - » For healthy brain, eye, and attention span development, total screen time (TV, computer, phone and other digital devices) should be limited to under two hours per day.
 - » Keep TV set and Internet-connected electronic devices out of your child’s bedroom.
 - » Monitor what media your child is accessing, including any websites he/she is visiting.
 - » Co-view TV, movies, and videos with your child and use this as a way of discussing important family values.
 - » Enforce a mealtime and bedtime “curfew” for media devices.
- Compliance with the AAP screen time recommendations is vital for healthy spiritual development. Minimal screen

(<https://www.aap.org>)

time can help children develop an appetite for spiritual things, i.e., family worship, personal devotions, Sabbath School, church, being still and knowing God (Ps. 46:10 NIV); as well as help protect the child's ability to experience pleasure later in life (*Thrilled to Death* by Dr. Archibald D. Hart).

- Resist the temptation to use media to provide childcare. Non-electronic options such as reading, physical play with toys, board games, and outdoor play are much healthier options (AAP).
- Ensure music and media content is congruent with Christian morals and values during this highly formative stage of development. Here are examples of ideas often portrayed in contrast to God's Kingdom:
 - » Spiritualism. God clearly instructs against such practices (Dt. 18:10-12).
 - » To follow your heart rather than the rules. God's word says the human heart is deceitful and untrustworthy, and we should follow God's rules for success (Jer. 17:9; Josh. 1:7-8).
 - » Contradictions of Biblical values such as honesty, purity, being a peace maker, speaking noble words, and practicing good health habits are found in music, movies, TV, and cartoons.
- Some video games can shut down the moral control center of the brain, develop an insatiable appetite for excitement, and teach behavior contrary to Scripture. Minimizing the development of an appetite for

video games at this age can help avoid significant challenges during the teen years and beyond

(<http://littlelightstudios.tv/product-category/battlefieldhollywood/>).

- Resources:

- » Christian Media Options
<http://www.christianbook.com/>
- » Media reviews from a Christian perspective
<http://www.pluggedin.com/>



**Children
Ages: 5-10**

**Parenting Role:
Authority**

**Parenting Goal: Child independently makes
positive life skills and moral choices**

Spiritual Goals:

**Help your child develop the
following:**

- **Love for Jesus**
- **Faith relationships with other people**
- **Strong belief in prayer, faith, and love**
- **Christian character**

Tips for the “Authority” Parenting Role

- Teach your child respect for authority.
- Teach your child good manners to train him/her to think of others.
- Teach your child responsibility. Assign chores and ensure they are done.
- Allow your child to experience the consequences of his/her choices.
- Win decisively by doing the following:
 - » Be consistent.
 - » Follow through on what you say.
 - » Stay the course despite your child’s protests.

Helpful Hints for Home

1. Elevate Jesus as the only source of life: abundant and eternal.

- Teach your child the importance of baptism.
- Prepare your child for baptism.
 - » Provide many opportunities for accepting Jesus as a personal Savior.
 - » Strongly encourage a personal friendship with Jesus.
- Children’s ideas about God begin with their feelings about their parents. Share your love in the following ways:
 - » Be responsive to your child’s needs.

- » Listen to your child.
- » Stop what you are doing.
- » Make eye contact and smile.
- » Make appropriate comments.
- » Be generous with hugs and kisses.
- » Give sincere compliments.
- » Forgive and forget.
- » Read stories about God's love.
- » Connect your love with God's love.

2. Teach each family member that his/her value as a person comes from God as his/her Creator, Redeemer, and Leader.

- Emphasize your child's specialness to God. Help your child develop a solid sense of self-respect and confidence.
- Show your child how to deal positively with mistakes and setbacks.
- Teach your child how to confess his/her sins, experience forgiveness, and realize that both you and God love him/her even when your child makes mistakes.



3. Teach your child to serve Jesus by serving others.

- Mentor your child in occasionally planning and leading the family worship.
- Assign your child routine chores appropriate for his/her maturity.
- Provide opportunities for service projects.

- Help your child find a place to serve at church.
- Model service to others at church and in your community.

4. Teach your child to love others the way God does.

- Respect the feelings and viewpoints of each family member.
- Communicate clearly and frequently.
- Nurture gently in keeping with your child's needs.
- Consider your child's individual temperament and respect his/her current stage of development.
- Communicate strong disapproval of your child hurting animals or other people.
- Model how to be a caring person.
- Encourage your child to think of herself/himself as a helpful and caring person.
- Limit wardrobe and toys to reasonable amounts. Encourage sharing with others.

5. Married parents, consistently invest in your marriage as a primary tool to encourage your child to follow Jesus.

(See resources page in back of book.)

6. Follow Jesus through the temptations of secular culture.

- Consistently spend time alone with God in Bible reading and prayer, and encourage your child to do the same.
- Help your child recognize Satan's counterfeits, shortcuts, and lies.
- Make the differences between good and evil clear.
- Have clear consequences for ignoring the standards of the home.

- Ensure toys in your home communicate Christian values.
- Protect your child's mind from evil.
- Nurture your child with Christian values.
- Teach your child in an age-appropriate way:
 - » Say exactly what you mean.
 - » Teach your child that God is his/her loving Creator and Protector.
 - » Concentrate on one thing at a time.
 - » Nurture your child's natural belief and faith.
 - » Teach positively and clearly. Don't bring up doubts.
 - » Make Bible learning fun and interesting. Pair it with your love and care.
 - » Use Bible stories to introduce your child to God.
 - » Emphasize what the story tells us about God.
 - » Be careful to present a balanced picture of God—loving and merciful, as well as powerful and authoritative.
 - » Start to purposefully expand your growing child's ideas about God through Biblical analogies and descriptions of God.
 - » Help your child realize God is with his/her through difficulties.
 - » Show your own love and respect for God's Word.
 - » Have a plan for memorizing Scripture.
 - » Personalize the Bible for your child.
- Teach specific religious activities:
 - » Decide what religious actions you would like to teach your child.

- » Do them regularly.
- Teach your child to enjoy church:
 - » Sit together in church as a family during childhood and adolescence.
 - » Help your child participate in the church service.
 - » Be involved in church activities for children.
 - » Train your child how to behave in church. Plan ahead, be patient, and be persistent.
 - » Create ways to engage your child during worship service: ie., have him/her listen for a specific word the pastor says during his/her message and share with the pastor at the end of the sermon.
 - » Be an active parent-teacher. Take charge of your child's religious education. Work closely with church leaders to be sure your child gets the best religious education possible.
 - » Help your child find a place to serve at church.
- Maximize your family's influence:
 - » Eat meals together regularly with media off.
 - » Be interested in what your child is doing.
 - » Cultivate family hobbies and interests.
 - » Plan many interesting family activities.
 - » Invite other children to do things with your family. Welcome your child's friends.
 - » Let your child help plan family activities.

- » Cultivate your child's friendship. Frequently have a "date" with your child.
- Teach your child to make decisions:
 - » Begin early with simple choices between two alternatives that are equally acceptable, but mutually exclusive.
 - » Accept your child's choice; don't berate. Help your child follow through on the decision.
 - » Gradually enlarge the scope of decisions your child is allowed to make. Be sure the boundaries are clear.
 - » Allow natural consequences to take place in case of a wrong decision. Be supportive, but do not remove the consequences.
 - » If the decision is within the scope you have allowed your child, provide complete freedom of decision. Do not make the decision for the child.
 - » Express confidence in your child's ability to make the decision and follow through.
 - » Help your child realize, mentally and emotionally, that God is deeply interested in every aspect of his/her life and will guide in every decision.
- Teach your child to obey:
 - » Provide clear standards for behavior.
 - » Enforce clear consequences for misbehavior. Be reasonable.
 - » Respect each family member's individuality.
 - » Provide an emotional climate of warmth and care in the home.

- » Expect mature behavior; encourage personal responsibility and independence.
- Bless your child often by telling him/her the following:
 - » “I love you”
 - » “I am proud of you”
 - » “You are good at . . .”

Source: *How to Help Your Child Really Love Jesus*
by Donna J. Habenicht, Ed.D.

- Implement home media management.

“Overstimulation of the brain’s pleasure center has the potential to do as much damage as addiction to any major drug. The overstimulation of our pleasure system, as now being experienced through many high-tech gadgets, computers, games, iPods, and so on, actually creates what is called an addiction process—a process that slowly shuts down the brain’s pleasure system like a regular addiction” (Hart, 2007, pp. 25-26, *Thrilled to Death*).

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 - » For healthy brain, eye, and attention span development, total screen time (TV, computer, phone and other digital devices) should be limited to under two hours per day.
 - » Keep TV set and Internet-connected electronic devices out of your child’s bedroom.
 - » Monitor what media your child is accessing, including any websites

he/she is visiting and social media sites he/she may be using.

- » Co-view TV, movies, and videos with your child, and use this as a way of discussing important family values.
- » Enforce a mealtime and bedtime “curfew” for media devices, including all cell phones.

(<https://www.aap.org>)

- Compliance with the AAP screen time recommendations is vital for healthy spiritual development. Minimal screen time can help children develop an appetite for spiritual things, i.e., family worship, personal devotions, Sabbath School, church, being still and knowing God (Ps. 46:10 NIV); as well as help protect the child’s ability to experience pleasure later in life (*Thrilled to Death* by Dr. Archibald D. Hart).
- Resist the temptation to use media to provide childcare. Non-electronic options such as reading, physical play with toys, board games, and outdoor play are much healthier options (AAP).
- Seek music and media content congruent with Christianity and discuss with your child content that is both congruent and in contrast.
 - » Values of God’s Kingdom often illustrated well in movies and cartoons include love, beauty, victory over an enemy, getting saved from an impossible situation, and forgiveness.
 - » Here are examples of ideas often portrayed in contrast to God’s

Kingdom:

- * Spiritualism. God clearly instructs against such practices (Dt.18:10-12).
- * Life after death, in contrast to Jesus referring to death as a sleep (Jn. 11:11-14).
- * To follow your heart rather than the rules. God's word says the human heart is deceitful and untrustworthy, and we should follow God's rules for success (Jer. 17:9; Josh. 1:7-8).
- * Contradictions of Biblical values, such as honesty, purity, being a peace maker, speaking noble words, and practicing good health habits are found in music, movies, TV, and cartoons.
- Some video games can shut down the moral control center of the brain, develop an insatiable appetite for excitement, and teach behavior contrary to Scripture; therefore, it is important to limit the amount of time spent and carefully monitor content of such game play

(<http://littleslightstudios.tv/product-category/battlefieldhollywood/>).

- Resources:
 - » Christian Media Options
<http://www.christianbook.com/>
 - » Media reviews from a Christian perspective
<http://www.pluggedin.com/>



**Children
Ages: 10-14**

**Parenting Role: Transition
from Authority to Mentor**

**Parenting Goal: Child independently
makes positive choices**

**Spiritual Goal:
Commitment to Jesus
through baptism.**



Tips for Transitioning to a “Mentor” Parenting Role

- Start significantly expanding the scope of decisions your child is allowed to make as he/her transitions into the teen years.
- Be sure the boundaries are clear.
- Pursue open communication; don't overreact.
- Refrain from harsh criticism, judgment, or punishment when your child shares honestly.

Helpful Hints for Home

- 1. Elevate Jesus as the only source of life: abundant and eternal.**
 - Teach your child the importance of baptism.
 - Prepare your child for baptism.
 - Provide many opportunities for accepting Jesus as a personal Savior.
 - Strongly encourage a personal friendship with Jesus.
 - Go through a Bible study with your child designed to prepare him/her for baptism.
 - Respect your child's desires; go at his/her pace; make sure he/she doesn't feel pressured to get baptized while encouraging him/her to do so.

2. Teach each family member that his/her value as a person comes from God as his/her Creator, Redeemer, and Leader.

- Emphasize each child's specialness to God. Help your child develop a solid sense of self-respect and confidence.
- Show your child how to deal positively with mistakes and setbacks.
- Teach your child how to confess his/her sins, experience forgiveness, and realize that both you and God love your child even when he/she makes mistakes.

3. Teach your child to serve Jesus by serving others.

- Mentor your child in occasionally planning and leading the family worship.
- Assign your child routine chores at home.
- Provide opportunities to serve other people beyond your immediate family.
- Help your child find a place to serve at church.
- Model service to others at church and in your community.

4. Teach your child to love others the way God does.

- Respect the feelings and viewpoints of each family member.
- Communicate clearly and frequently.
- Nurture gently in keeping with your child's needs.
- Consider your child's individual temperament and respect your child's

current stage of development.

- Communicate strong disapproval of your child hurting animals or other people.
- Model how to be a caring person.
- Encourage your child to think of herself/himself as a helpful and caring person.
- Limit wardrobe and toys to reasonable amounts. Encourage sharing with others.

5. Married parents, consistently invest in your marriage as a primary tool to encourage your child to follow Jesus.

(See resources page in back of book.)

6. Follow Jesus through the temptations of secular culture.

- Consistently spend time alone with God in Bible reading and prayer, and encourage your child to do the same.
- Encourage scripture memorization.
- Explain religious symbolism carefully.
- Provide Christian role models for your child.
- Respond thoughtfully to questions.
- Help your child find Biblical principles to guide his/her life.
- Be firm for what is right. Give a clear message for living God's way.
- Show your child how to deal with guilt, receive forgiveness, and trust in Jesus.
- Show in your own life how God helps you grow spiritually. Be willing to share your personal walk with Jesus.
- Help your child recognize Satan's counterfeits, shortcuts, and lies.
- Make the difference between good and evil clear.

- Have clear consequences for ignoring the standards of the home.
- Protect your child's mind from evil.
- Nurture your child with Christian values.
- Teach your child in an age-appropriate way:
 - » Say exactly what you mean.
 - » Teach your child that God is his/her loving Creator and friend.
 - » Concentrate on one thing at a time.
 - » Nurture your child's natural belief and faith.
 - » Teach positively and clearly. Don't bring up doubts.
 - » Make Bible learning fun and interesting. Pair it with your love and care.
 - » Use Bible stories to introduce your child to God.
 - » Emphasize what the story tells us about God.
 - » Be careful to present a balanced picture of God—loving and merciful, as well as powerful and authoritative.
 - » Expand your child's ideas about God through Biblical analogies and descriptions of God.
 - » Help your child realize God is with him/her through difficulties.
 - » Show your own love and respect for God's Word.
 - » Have a plan for memorizing Scripture.
 - » Personalize the Bible for your child.
- Teach specific religious activities:
 - » Decide what religious actions you would like to teach your child.
 - » Do them regularly.
- Teach your child to enjoy church:

- » Sit together in church as a family during both childhood and adolescence.
- » Encourage your child to participate in the church service.
- » Be involved in church activities for young people.
- » Train your child how to behave in church. Plan ahead, be patient, and persistent.
- » Be an active parent-teacher. Take charge of your child's religious education. Work closely with church leaders to be sure your child gets the best religious education possible.
- » Help your child find a place to serve at church.
- Maximize your family's influence:
 - » Eat meals together regularly with media off.
 - » Be interested in what your child is doing.
 - » Cultivate family hobbies and interests.
 - » Plan many interesting family activities.
 - » Invite other children to do things with your family. Welcome your children's friends.
 - » Let your child help plan family activities.
 - » Cultivate your child's friendship. Frequently have a "date" with your child.
- Teach your child to make decisions:
 - » Begin early with simple choices between two alternatives that are equally acceptable, but mutually exclusive.
 - » Accept your child's choice; don't

- berate. Help your child follow through on the decision.
- » Gradually enlarge the scope of decisions your child is allowed to make. Be sure the boundaries are clear.
 - » Allow natural consequences to take place in case of a wrong decision. Be supportive, but do not remove the consequences.
 - » If the decision is within the scope you have allowed your child, provide complete freedom of decision. Do not make the decision for the child.
 - » Express confidence in the child's ability to make the decision and follow through.
 - » Help the child realize, mentally and emotionally, that God is deeply interested in every aspect of his/her life and will guide in every decision.
- Teach your child to obey:
 - » Provide clear standards for behavior.
 - » Enforce clear consequences for misbehavior.
 - » Be reasonable.
 - » Respect each family member's individuality.
 - » Provide an emotional climate of warmth and care in the home.
 - » Expect mature behavior; encourage personal responsibility and independence.
 - Bless your child often by telling him/her the following:
 - » "I love you"
 - » "I am proud of you"
 - » "You are good at. . ."

Primary Source: *How to Help Your Child Really Love Jesus*
by Donna J. Habenicht, Ed.D.

- Implement home media management.

“Overstimulation of the brain’s pleasure center has the potential to do as much damage as addiction to any major drug. The overstimulation of our pleasure system, as now being experienced through many high-tech gadgets, computers, games, iPods, and so on, actually creates what is called an addiction process—a process that slowly shuts down the brain’s pleasure system like a regular addiction” (Hart, 2007, pp. 25-26, *Thrilled to Death*).

- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends the following:
 - » For healthy brain, eye, and attention span development, total screen time (TV, computer, phone and other digital devices) should be limited to under two hours per day.
 - » Keep TV set and Internet-connected electronic devices out of your child’s bedroom.
 - » Monitor what media your child is accessing, including any websites he/she is visiting and social media sites he/she may be using.
 - » Co-view TV, movies, and videos with your child, and use this as a way of discussing important family values.
 - » Enforce a mealtime and bedtime “curfew” for media devices, including all cell phones. (<https://www.aap.org>)
- Compliance with the AAP screen time

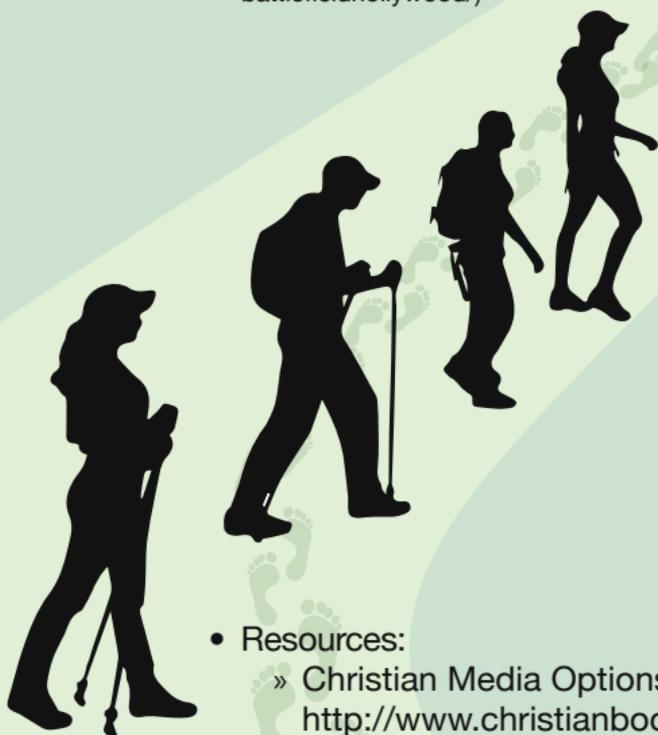
recommendations is vital for healthy spiritual development. Minimal screen time can help children develop an appetite for spiritual things, i.e., family worship, personal devotions, Sabbath School, church, being still and knowing God (Ps. 46:10 NIV); as well as help protect the child's ability to experience pleasure (*Thrilled to Death* by Archibald D. Hart).

- Resist the temptation to use media to provide childcare. Non-electronic options such as reading, physical play with toys, board games, and outdoor play are much healthier options (AAP).
- Seek music and media content congruent with Christianity. Discuss with your child content that illustrates well the values of God's Kingdom as well as those in contrast. Pursue dialogue. Be careful to keep the conversation open by listening respectfully to your child's perspective.
 - » Values of God's Kingdom often illustrated well in movies and cartoons include love, beauty, victory over an enemy, getting saved from an impossible situation, and forgiveness.
 - » Ideas often portrayed in contrast to God's Kingdom:
 - * Spiritualism. God instructs against such practices (Dt. 18:10-12).
 - * Life after death, in contrast to Jesus referring to death as a sleep (Jn. 11:11-14).
 - * To follow your heart rather than the rules. God's word says the human heart is deceitful, untrustworthy, and we should

follow God's rules for success (Jer. 17:9; Josh. 1:7-8).

- * Contradiction of Biblical values, such as honesty, purity, being a peace maker, speaking noble words, and practicing good health habits are found in music, movies, TV, and cartoons.
- Some video games can shut down the moral control center of the brain, develop an insatiable appetite for excitement, and teach behavior contrary to Scripture; therefore, it is important to limit the amount of time spent and carefully screen content of such game play.

(<http://littlelightstudios.tv/product-category/battlefieldhollywood/>)



- Resources:
 - » Christian Media Options
<http://www.christianbook.com/>
 - » Media reviews from a Christian perspective
<http://www.pluggedin.com/>

**Youth
Ages: 14-18**

**Parenting Role:
Mentor**

**Parenting Goal:
Independent Adult**

Spiritual Goals:
Help your teen learn to reason by
allowing him/her to explore the Bible
and other sources to discover answers
to his/her questions

Tips for the “Mentor” Parenting Role

- Allow your teen to make more decisions on his/her own, while sharing your perspective.
- Allow your teen to experience the consequences of his/her choices.
- Pursue open communication.
- Don't overreact.
- Refrain from harsh criticism, judgment, or punishment when your teen shares honestly.
- Debrief your teen's experiences with him/her.
- Be engaged in your teen's life.
- Be physically present while respecting his/her space.
- Seek to be in tune with your teen's emotions.
- Embrace other key mentors in your teen's life.
- Refrain from manipulating your teen through the use of guilt, shame, or any other indirect approach.

Helpful Hints for Home

- 1. Elevate Jesus as the only source of life: abundant and eternal.**
 - Provide opportunities for accepting Jesus as a personal Savior.
 - Emphasize Christ's righteousness for each person.

- Strongly encourage a personal friendship with Jesus.
- Prepare your teen for baptism.
- Respect your teen's desires; go at his/her pace; make sure he/she doesn't feel pressured to get baptized, while encouraging him/her to do so.
- Go through a Bible study with your teen designed to prepare him/her for baptism.

2. Teach each family member that his/her value as a person comes from God as his/her Creator, Redeemer, and Leader.

- Emphasize your teen's specialness to God because He created and redeemed his/her.
- Help your teen develop a solid sense of self-respect and confidence based on God's work to shape him/her for His service.
- Show your teen how to deal positively with mistakes and setbacks.

3. Teach your teen to love others the way God does.

- Respect your teen's growing maturity.
- Communicate strong disapproval of your teen hurting animals or other people.
- Help your teen understand how other people feel.
- Model how to be a caring person.
- Encourage your teen to think of himself/herself as a helpful and caring person.
- Limit wardrobe and toys to reasonable amounts. Encourage sharing with others.

4. Teach your teen to serve Jesus by serving others.

- Get your family regularly involved in helping others.
- Help your teen find a place to serve at church.
- Mentor your teen in occasionally planning and leading the family worship.
- Model service to others at church and in your community.

5. Married parents, consistently invest in your marriage as a primary tool to encourage your teen to follow Jesus.

(See resources page in back of book.)

6. Follow Jesus through the temptations of secular culture.

- Consistently spend time alone with God in Bible reading and prayer, and encourage your teen to do the same.
- Teach your teen how to use Bible study tools.
- Teach doctrines with increasing complexity as your teen's thinking matures.
- Inspire your teen with high ideals from God's Word.
- Explain reasons for right and wrong actions.
- Link rewards and punishment with your love and God's love.
- Encourage scripture memorization.
- Explain religious symbolism, carefully.
- Provide Christian role models for your teen.
- Respond thoughtfully to questions.
- Help your teen find Biblical principles to guide his/her life.

- Be firm for what is right. Give a clear message for living God's way.
- Help your teen deal with the discrepancy between her/his ideals and daily life.
- Show your teen how to deal with guilt, receive forgiveness, and trust in Christ.
- Be open to discussing difficult issues. Study to know what you personally believe.
- Show in your own life how God helps you grow spiritually. Be willing to share your personal walk with the Lord.
- Help your teen recognize Satan's counterfeits, shortcuts, and lies.
- Make the difference between good and evil clear.
- Help your teen learn to protect his/her mind from evil.
- Have clear consequences for ignoring the standards of the home.
- Nurture your teen with Christian values.

- Implement home media management.

“Overstimulation of the brain's pleasure center has the potential to do as much damage as addiction to any major drug. The overstimulation of our pleasure system, as now being experienced through many high-tech gadgets, computers, games, iPods, and so on, actually creates what is called an addiction process—a process that slowly shuts down the brain's pleasure system like a regular addiction” (Hart, 2007, pp. 25-26, *Thrilled to Death*).

- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends the following:
 - » For healthy brain, eye, and attention span development, total screen time (TV, computer, phone and other digital devices) should be limited to under two hours per day.
 - » Keep TV set and Internet-connected electronic devices out of your teen's bedroom.
 - » Monitor what media your teen is accessing, including any websites he/she is visiting and social media sites he/she may be using.
 - » Co-view TV, movies, and videos with your teen, and use this as a way of discussing important family values.
 - » Enforce a mealtime and bedtime "curfew" for media devices, including all cell phones
(<https://www.aap.org>).
- Compliance with the AAP screen time recommendations is vital for healthy spiritual development. Minimal screen time can help teens develop an appetite for spiritual things, i.e., family worship, personal devotions, Sabbath School, church, being still and knowing God (Ps. 46:10 NIV); as well as help protect the teen's ability to experience pleasure later in life (*Thrilled to Death* by Dr. Archibald D. Hart).
- Slowly transition to allowing your teen to make his/her own media choices during this development season. Encourage your teen to seek music and media content congruent with Christianity. Discuss with your teen content that

illustrates well the values of God's Kingdom, as well as those in contrast. Pursue dialogue. Be careful to keep the conversation open by listening respectfully to your teen's perspective.

- Values of God's Kingdom often illustrated well in movies include love, beauty, victory over an enemy, getting saved from an impossible situation, and forgiveness.
- Here are examples of ideas often portrayed in contrast to God's Kingdom:
 - » Spiritualism. God clearly instructs against such practices (Dt. 18:10-12).
 - » Life after death, in contrast to Jesus referring to death as a sleep (Jn. 11:11-14).
 - » To follow your heart rather than the rules. God's word says the human heart is deceitful and untrustworthy, and we should follow God's rules for success (Jer. 17:9; Josh. 1:7-8).
 - » Contradictions of Biblical values such as honesty, purity, being a peace maker, speaking noble words, and practicing good health habits are found in music, movies, and TV.
- Some video games can shut down the moral control center of the brain, develop an insatiable appetite for excitement, and teach behavior contrary to Scripture. Continue to discuss these realities with your teen, and slowly start allowing him/her to make his/her own decisions in regards to video game play (<http://littlelightstudios.tv/product-category/battlefieldhollywood/>).
- Resources:
 - » Christian Media Options

<http://www.christianbook.com/>

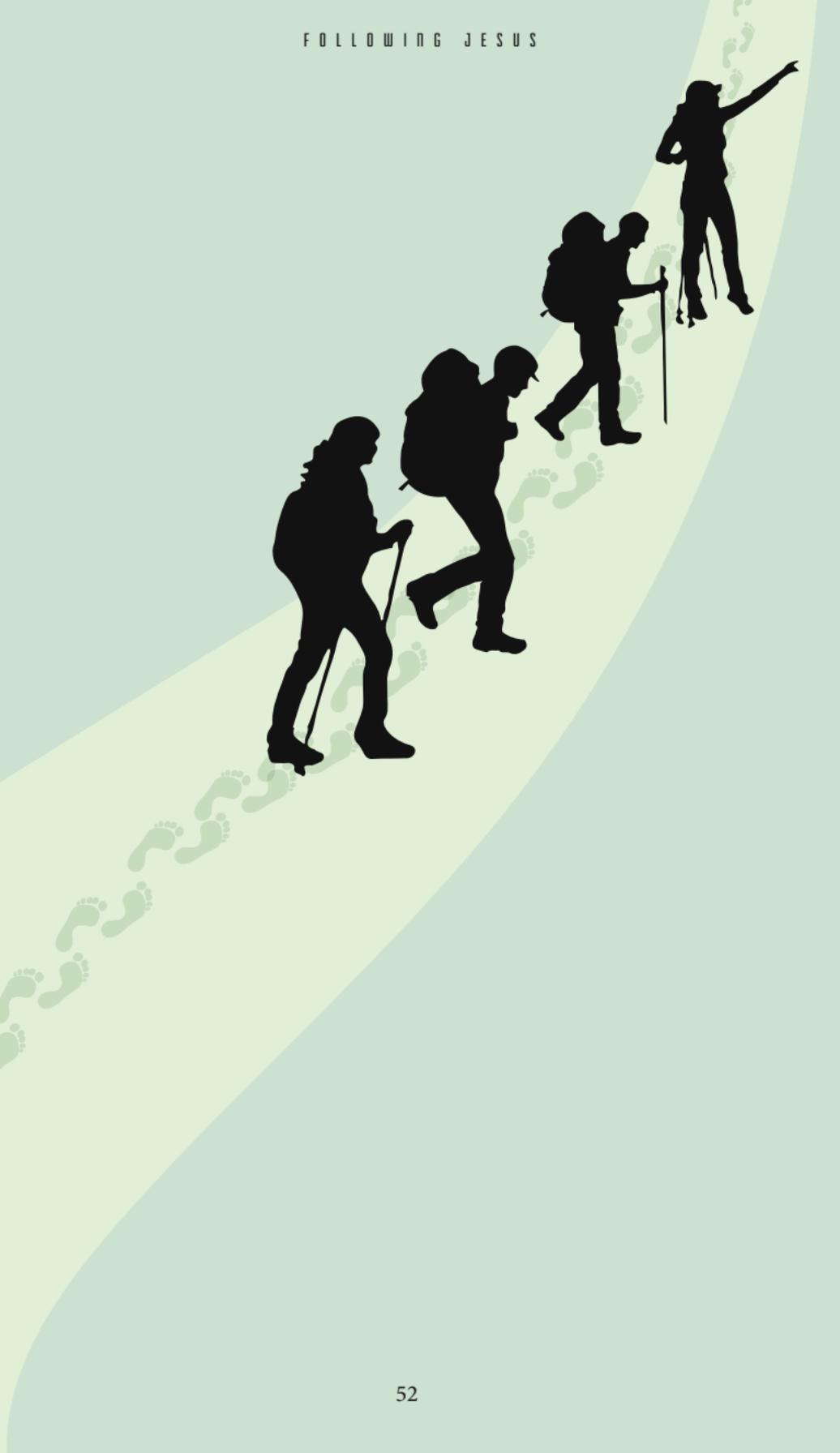
» Media reviews from a Christian perspective

<http://www.pluggedin.com/>

- Teach your teen to enjoy church:
 - » Sit together in church as a family.
 - » Encourage your teen to participate in the church service.
 - » Be involved in church activities for teens.
 - » Be an active parent-teacher. Take charge of your teen's religious education. Work closely with church leaders to be sure your teen gets the best religious education possible.
 - » Help your teen find a place to serve at church.
- Maximize your family's influence:
 - » Provide an alternative to peer pressure by making home the most attractive place in the world. Send out a message of warmth and welcome.
 - » Eat meals together regularly with media off.
 - » Be interested in what your teen is doing.
 - » Cultivate family hobbies and interests.
 - » Plan many interesting family activities.
 - » Invite other teens to do things with your family. Welcome your teen's friends.
 - » Cultivate your teen's friendship. Do special outings one-on-one with your teen that he/she wants to do.
 - » Let your teen help plan family activities.
- Teach your teen to make decisions:
 - » Give many opportunities to make choices.
 - » Gradually enlarge the scope of decisions your teen is allowed to make.

- » Be sure the boundaries are clear.
- » Allow natural consequences to take place in case of wrong decisions. Be supportive, but do not remove the consequences.
- » If the decision is within the scope you have allowed your teen, provide complete freedom of decision. Do not make the decision for the teen.
- » Express confidence in your teen's ability to make the decision and follow through.
- » Help your teen realize, mentally and emotionally, that God is deeply interested in every aspect of his/her life and will guide in every decision.
- Teach your teen to obey:
 - » Provide clear standards for behavior.
 - » Enforce clear consequences for misbehavior.
 - » Be reasonable.
 - » Respect each family member's individuality.
 - » Provide an emotional climate of warmth and care in the home.
 - » Expect mature behavior.
 - » Encourage personal responsibility and independence.
- Bless your teen often by telling him/her:
 - » "I love you"
 - » "I am proud of you"
 - » "You are good at. . ."

Primary Source: *How to Help Your Child Really Love Jesus* by Donna J. Habenicht, Ed.D.



Young Adults
Ages: 18-Independence

Parenting Role:
Mentor

Parenting Goal:
Self-governing Adult

Spiritual Goals:

Help your young adult learn to reason:

- **Allow your young adult to ask questions**
- **Help your young adult explore the Bible and other sources to discover answers to his/her questions**

Tips for the “Mentor” Parenting Role

- Allow your young adult to make more decisions on his/her own, while sharing your perspective.
- Allow your young adult to experience the consequences of his/her choices.
- Pursue open communication.
- Don't overreact.
- Refrain from harsh criticism, judgment, or punishment when your young adult shares honestly.
- Debrief your young adult's experiences with him/her.
- Be engaged in your young adult's life.
- Be physically present while respecting your young adult's space.
- Seek to be in tune with your young adult's emotions.
- Embrace other key mentors in your young adult's life.
- Refrain from manipulating your young adult through the use of guilt, shame, or any other indirect approach.

Helpful Hints for Home

Unless an intervention is required, wait until your young adult invites you to share your perspective. When God provides such an opportunity remember the following:

- 1. Elevate Jesus as the only source of life: abundant and eternal.**
 - Emphasize Christ's righteousness for each person.
 - Encourage a personal friendship with Jesus.
 - Encourage your young adult to follow Jesus in all his/her choices and decisions.
- 2. Teach each family member that his/her value as a person comes from God as his/her Creator, Redeemer, and Leader.**
 - Emphasize your young adult's specialness to God.
 - Help your young adult develop a solid sense of self-respect and confidence based on God's work to shape him/her for His service.
 - Help your young adult deal positively with mistakes and setbacks.
- 3. Teach your young adult to love others the way God does.**
 - Respect your young adult's growing maturity.
 - Help your young adult understand how other people feel.
 - Model how to be a caring person.
 - Encourage your young adult to think of herself/himself as a helpful and caring person.
- 4. Encourage your young adult to serve Jesus by serving others.**
 - Look for opportunities to serve others along with your young adult.
 - Encourage your young adult to find a

place to serve at church.

- Model service to others at church and in your community.
- Encourage your young adult to live as a conduit for God's blessings rather than a reservoir for personal pleasure.

5. Married parents, consistently invest in your marriage as a primary tool to encourage your young adult to follow Jesus.

(See resources page in back of book.)

6. Follow Jesus through the temptations of secular culture.

- Inspire your young adult with high ideals from God's Word.
- Explain reasons for right and wrong actions.
- Increase personal responsibility for choices.
- Respond thoughtfully to questions.
- Help your young adult find Biblical principles to guide his/her life.
- Be firm for what is right. Give a clear message for living God's way.
- Help your young adult deal with the discrepancy between her/his ideals and daily life.
- Pursue your young adult's friendship.
- When invited, help your young adult process guilt, receive forgiveness, and trust in Jesus.
- Be open to discussing difficult issues. Study to know what you personally believe.
- Show in your own life how God helps you grow spiritually. Be willing to share

your personal walk with the Lord.

- Help your young adult recognize Satan's counterfeits, shortcuts, and lies.
- Provide an alternative to peer pressure by making home the most attractive place in the world. Send out a message of warmth and welcome.
- Make the difference between good and evil clear.
- Have clear consequences for ignoring the standards of the home.
- Encourage your young adult to protect his/her mind from evil.
- Encourage your young adult to live based on Christian values.
- Implement media management.
 - » Be available for discussions with your young adult in regards to media content and use. When your young adult invites you into such a discussion, focus on Biblical principles. Be willing to process with your young adult the best application of those principles in his/her life, but don't tell him or her—join him/her in wrestling with it.
 - » Allow your young adult the freedom to make his/her own decisions about media content and use.
 - » Only in extreme cases of addiction or significant danger should you intervene to offer your help and perspective.
- Resources:
 - » Christian Media Options
<http://www.christianbook.com/>
 - » Media reviews from a Christian perspective <http://www.pluggedin.com/>

Primary Source: *How to Help Your Child Really Love Jesus* by Donna J. Habenicht, Ed.D



Adult Children

**Parenting Role:
Friend**

**Parenting Goal:
Friend to your adult child**

Spiritual Goal: Encourage your adult child to follow Jesus forever; share Jesus always through your prayers, friendship, influence, and example

Tips for the Parenting Role of “Friend”

- Enjoy being relationally engaged.
- Embrace your adult child’s changing friendships.
- Wait for his/her invitation to share your advice.
- Refrain from manipulating your adult child through the use of guilt, shame, or any other indirect approach.
- Married parents, invest in your marriage as a primary tool to encourage your adult child to follow Jesus.

(See resources page in back of book.)

Resources

Marriage, Family, and Parenting

- *Bringing Up Boys/Girls* by James Dobson
- *Confident Parenting* by Jim Burns & Doug Fields
- *Family Driven Faith* by Voddie Baucham JR.
- Family Life

<http://www.familylife.com/>

- *Homebuilders Parenting Series*
 - *Weekend to Remember* marriage retreat
 - *How To Help Your Child Really Love Jesus* by Donna J. Habenicht, ED.D.
 - *Margin* by Richard A. Swenson, M.D.
 - *Parenting by The Book* by John Rosemond
 - *Focus on the Family*
- <http://www.focusonthefamily.com/>
- *HomeWord*
- <http://homeword.com/>

Media Management

- Little Light Studios
<http://littleslightstudios.tv/>
- *Thrilled to Death* by Archibald D. Hart

