

Lake Forest Church Community Group Sermon Discussions
Sermon Series: Under the Influence
Week 4; September 13, 2009: Make it Personal

INTRODUCTION

When you sign up for parenting, you sign up for sacrifice. But there is one thing a parent should never sacrifice. In fact, if you do, you may lose the thing that will ultimately be the most important thing in your child's life as well as in yours.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Think back to the time before you had children. In retrospect, how much time do you feel you had for yourself back then? What were some of the things you did "for yourself" before you had kids? What were some things you gave up when you had kids?
2. If you were to audit a normal week in your home, how much of your non-working, non-sleeping hours are spent doing things for your or with your children? How much personal time do you have – just for you?
3. Read Deuteronomy 6: 4-9. What is the main point of the passage in your view? Name the ways in which this passage reinforces that it is a parent's responsibility to help their children grow spiritually. Review verses 5 and 6. To whom are these two verses addressed?
4. What kind of personal commitment on the part of a parent does verse six call for? Why do you think Moses was so emphatic that the parents themselves have to commit themselves personally to a relationship with God and to following His ways?
5. In the message, Mike said that if we share our faith with our children because we think it's good for them but aren't pursuing a relationship with God ourselves, eventually our children will begin to suspect that faith is really not that important. Do you agree? Why or why not?
6. Think back over your use of time over the last week. In what ways did you make time and take responsibility for your own personal spiritual development?
7. Looking ahead, how can you reallocate time in the coming week to take even 10 minutes each day to pray and read the bible? Brainstorm for a few minutes with your group about how you can shift that dynamic. After you share these "best practices", reflect on what step each of you can take this week to take responsibility and make a more meaningful personal connection with Christ.
8. As you close in prayer, pray for each other's faith life and come ready next week to "check in" and measure progress.

TAKING IT HOME...

Make it Personal: Is this a growing, authentic, personal relationship for me? It has to be in you before it's in them. Eventually, your children will discover whether pursuing a relationship is something that's important to you or whether you merely think it should be important for them. How will you put yourself first this week in order to keep your relationship with Jesus growing and alive?

*Adapted from the Rethink Group