



D64

PARTNERSHIP

Transforming the Church by Building the Family.





WET CEMENT

Have you ever had the opportunity to write your name or draw a picture in wet cement?

You know that there is a limited amount of time that the concrete is workable enough to easily write your name. The same is true for our children. In many ways, they are like wet concrete. As time goes on, they become harder and harder to shape and form.

Why Family is Vital to Establishing Faith in the Next Generation.

Parents have the greatest ability to shape and form their children. In fact, research indicates that a child's family has the greatest amount of influence on their spiritual development. The vast majority of people come to faith by being *raised* in faith. According to the Barna Group, "...among Christians who embraced Christ before their teen years, half were led to Christ by their parents..."¹ So, if the dominant pathway is family, then we need to do everything we can to impress a biblical worldview in a child's heart at the time when the cement is still wet.

Far and away, parents have the highest amount of influence as it relates to a child coming to faith in Christ. It's worth noting that grandparents are a close second. There are many things that a parent can do to make a spiritual impact in the life of their children. For instance, if a parent will simply bring their child to church every week, there is a 28% increase in the likelihood of that child having lifelong faith.² However, we have to remember that proximity to church doesn't mean discipleship. Getting a

child to church is only one very small step and will not at all guarantee lifelong faith. In fact, depending on the study you would read, of those that attended church, 60-85% will leave their church after graduation and never ever go back to church.

So, simple church attendance will not make for lasting faith.

So what is the solution?

One word: **Partnership.**

There must be a solid, synergistic partnership between the parent and the church.

1 "Evangelism Is Most Effective Among Kids." thebarnagroup.org. October 11, 2004. <https://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/5-barna-update/196-evangelism-is-most-effective-among-kids#VQI0NEihebl>.

2 McClure, Dustin. "Helping Kids Keep the Faith" FullerYouthInstitute.org. Accessed March 13, 2015. <http://fulleryouthinstitute.org/articles/helping-kids-keep-the-faith>.



D64 PARTNERSHIP

At New Life, we call this the **D64 partnership**. The D64 Partnership is about the home and the church working together to make a spiritual impact in the lives of young people.

It's built upon **Deuteronomy 6:4-9**. Moses instructs God's people with these words:

⁴ "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.⁶ *And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.*⁷ You shall teach them diligently to *your children*, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.



These words formed the foundation of the entire Israelite culture. In fact, when Jesus is asked which of the commandments of the Bible is the most important, He references this verse (Matthew 22:37).

Moses gives us three simple, yet profound, principles for passing on a legacy of faith to the next generation.

First, he notes the power of personal faith (vs 6).

The greatest way we develop our child's relationship with Christ is by cultivating our personal relationship with Christ. In a very real sense, we cannot pass along what we do not possess. Our first priority must be to passionately pursue Christ in our own lives.

Second, he reminds us to take advantage of the God moments that happen in the course of life (vs 7).

As we're in the car, going through the store, or watching television, we are often presented with regular moments that can be turned into God moments. Much of parenting is responding to the new crises that occur throughout life. It's reactive. Use those moments to teach your child how to understand God and how He would want them to respond to the situations of life.

Thirdly, Moses instructs us to see past the immediate concerns and pressures of life in order to think long term (vs 8).

This is where we focus on proactive ways to intentionally invest into our children. Essentially, we build 'doorposts' that aren't based upon the ebb and flow of life. These family disciplines provide the consistent infusion of God and His Word into the home.

These three ideas compose the superstructure of passing faith from one generation to the next.



We believe there are 4 key ideas that drive the D64 Partnership. Without these commitments, we diminish the ability to effectively disciple the children and teens that are a part of our church family.

These drivers provide fuel that runs the engine. In essence, they are a statement of both values and motivation. These four key ideas make up the heart behind the actions and ideas of the strategy.

WHAT MAKES THE D64 PARTNERSHIP WORK?

All too often, it can seem like the home and the church are in competition with one another. With hectic schedules and overloaded lives, it can be tough to find the time, energy and focus to feel like your making real progress on the things that matter. **What if the church and home could get on the same page?** What if they could work together with common goals and strategy to make the eternal investment of the gospel into the lives of our kids. We believe this can happen.

4 Key Drivers



GETTING STARTED



So where do you start? **The best and most productive place to start is with a weekly Faith Talk in your home.** A Faith Talk is a time where your family gathers together to pray together, read and discuss a passage

of scripture, and talk about one big idea. You could think of this as a family devotional time.

We realize that this might seem a little intimidating for some. That is a normal feeling. So, in the next couple of pages, we outline how to do a Family Faith Talk.

Additionally, we work hard to give you everything you need to do this successfully. Each week, we send out an email with the topic and verse that your student covered in their group. You can use this same passage and big idea in your Faith Talk. This weekly email also includes parenting resources and other great ideas for making your family time fun and memorable.

of Partnership



To sign up for our weekly **Family Connection** email

VISIT

auroranewlife.com/parenting

A top-down view of hands spreading butter on a white dinner roll at a dining table. The hands are positioned to spread butter from a block on the roll. The background shows other plates of food and a warm, dimly lit setting.

FAITH TALKS

One of the most important pieces to the D64 partnership is the weekly Faith Talk that takes place in your home. The following is largely taken from the "Faith Talk Seminar" from *legacymilestones.org*. Faith Talks are intentional times set aside at least once each week for conversation around the Scripture with your family. We see this as a priority because we are convinced that spiritual training takes place one step at a time in the context of everyday life. While leading Faith Talks, relationship is your priority, the Bible is your handbook, and life is your classroom.

★ faith talk tip

Family dinner makes for a great time to talk about, God, faith, and daily life.

Planning Your Faith Talk

In the following section, there is an outline for you to use if you so desire. Don't feel locked into any one structure. Variety will often keep things fresh and generate renewed interest.

Always aim to have your children walk away with some tangible truth.

Each week, we will send you a potential topic and scripture that you could use for your Faith Talk. We provide this as a way to help you, but don't feel locked in to what is sent to you. There are a number of ways to do your family's Faith Talk. Different seasons call for different approaches.

One note of caution - Be careful of the danger of addressing felt needs continually. One way to avoid this is to choose a path that is Scripture first, deriving the topic from the passage you are reading through.

Remember the goal is to build lasting faith in your child. We are thinking for the long term as much as the short term. *This is why we will send you a weekly email with a Core Competency that you can address in your weekly Faith Talk.* This will ensure your child develops completely in their understanding of God, the Bible and being a devoted disciple of Christ.

Sample Faith Talk Outline

1. Open in Prayer (Have everyone in your family take turns each week leading in prayer).

2. Teach and Discuss

- Try to focus one idea or theme.

This becomes a takeaway. Plan activities and the entire time around this focus.

- Use questions that pull them into the discussion. This is not a lecture opportunity for you to jump on your soapbox.

- Use an object, saying or memory verse to cement the big idea, Core Competency, or thought (i.e. God is not old. He's eternal).

3. Close in Prayer



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How do I find the time to do this?

There has never been a time in history when families are as busy as they are today. Between school, school activities, sports, dance, piano lessons, scouts, work schedules, and everyday life, it's tough to find the time to do anything. So, it comes down to making a decision about what matters most. What will make the biggest, long-term (eternal) impact in the life of your child? The answer is a fully developed relationship with Christ. So, you'll have to intentionally carve out the time for your Faith Talk.

That said, you know your family. So, it doesn't necessarily mean quitting everything. For some, it's best to set a night of the week because everyone knows that's a protected night. Others find it easier to put it on a calendar for a month. Some families use the time they are already together. For instance, they use dinner time or bedtime as their Faith Talk time. Others blend it with fun times. How you do it will change. The important thing is that you choose to do it regularly. That consistency pays big dividends over time.

ON QUESTIONS

We've never done this before. Won't it be awkward or weird?

We wish we could promise that each Faith Talk will be magical and life changing when you get started. While it certainly could be, it may be a bit clunky at first. That's okay. In fact, it's normal. This is not about short-term pay off. This is a long-term investment. Think of it like building a building. At first, it looks chaotic and messy, but as you continue to work, the structure takes form and starts to look like the blueprint. The trick is to stick with it, try to make it fun, and be consistent.

What if they ask me a question I don't know the answer to?

There is not doubt that this will happen. Kids and teenagers will stump you and even shock you. When this happens, it's important that you don't try to fake them out. If you don't know, tell them that. In fact, the best thing to say is "I don't know. Let's find out together." This process of discovery will then be meaningful and memorable. Just remember, we are always here to help you navigate the tough topics that will come your way in parenting.

How can I get them to talk and engage in discussion?

There is nothing more unsettling than a couch full of silence during a Faith Talk. So, how can you get them talking? There are a number of possible options. We'll offer three ideas here.

First, make Faith Talks fun. Learning doesn't mean school. Come up with create ways to teach stories and make thing interactive.

Second, ask open-ended questions. Questions like "What was your favorite part of the story we just read?" can invite them to share what stood out in their mind.

Third, invite them to lead the Faith Talk. Have them prepare and share from a passage. You'll be amazed as you learn what is inside their heart.

Resources New Life Offers

As parents and caregivers, you use your influence to shape and mold your kids for Christ. As a church, we want to use our influence to give you the tools that you need to accomplish that. Our desire is to equip you with everything you need to be a D64 parent. Here are a few small ways that happens:

Weekly Family Connection Email

Each week we send an email that provides resources and a guide for your family's Faith Talk.

Intentional Ministry Alignment

Each age bracket of our family ministry is intentionally align along the same theme each week. This allows for you to talk about the same big idea with all of your children regardless of which ministry they attend.

RightNow Media

RightNow Media is an online video library full of bible studies and interactive video series (Think Netflix for church). We provide this to you with no cost for you to use at home.

Regular Parenting Seminars

Several times a year, we provide a parenting seminar on topics that are relevant to every parent.