



Intentional Parenting

Our desire as parents should be to give our children intentional gifts; we should give what is useful after carefully thinking through what would be most beneficial to them.

Some parents already do this careful decision-making in the physical realm. Our family knows some parents who limit or eliminate refined sugar in their children's diets.

This intentional mindset does not—indeed, should not—need to stop with choices that affect our children's bodies. It should characterize all that we give our children—spiritually, physically, socially, mentally, emotionally, and practically.

Intentional parents operate under a purposeful mentality. That mindset demands some hard decisions and some positive stubbornness that can stand up against the current of popular opinion.

The Goal

Ask an intentional parent, “What is the goal?” and you will probably hear something like this: “I want her to be a strong Christian”; “We want him to have good character”; “I want him to be prepared for life as a productive adult”; “We want to protect her heart”; “We want to develop our child's God-given mind and abilities.”

The Method

Intentional parents know that, in order to reach the goal, we must teach our children. Unfortunately, the word “teach” conjures up a picture of school desks and textbooks in most people's minds. But that's a very limited view of teaching based on the model the ancient Greeks gave us. “Teaching,” to them, meant dispensing knowledge. So they would gather as many brains as possible into one room in order to have the teacher dispense knowledge efficiently.

The Hebrews, however, had a very different concept of teaching. To “teach” in the Hebrew culture meant building a relationship, spending time with a person in order to learn from watching him and interacting with him. Now, this form of teaching took a lot of time; it was in no sense efficient. But it was highly effective.

God has called parents to that effective kind of teaching. We are called to develop deliberate relationships with the children He has entrusted to us. Those relationships form the bridge for effectively imparting wisdom and preparing our children to be godly adults.

Once we have built that bridge of a relationship, we will have an effective transporting structure in place for teaching our children. We can give them the best gifts a parent can give.



RELATED SCRIPTURE

These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up (Deuteronomy 5:6-7).

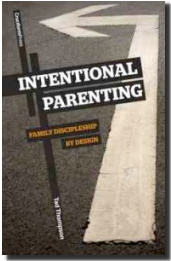
Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it (Proverbs 22:6).

My people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things, things from of old—things we have heard and known, things our ancestors have told us. We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done. He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our ancestors to teach their children, so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God and

would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands (Psalm 78:1-7).



RELATED RESOURCES



Intentional Parenting: Family Discipleship by Design

Tad Thompson

ISBN 978-1936760060

The Big Picture and a Simple Plan:

That's what you need to do family discipleship well. There are literally thousands of books available on how to live various aspects of the Christian life.

Of these, at least a couple of dozen pertaining to family life and child training are well worth reading. This is not one of those books. This book is designed to help you take what you have read, as well as all the sermons, teachings, and exhortations you have received on child training and leadership in the home, and make sense of it. Pastor Tad Thompson has assembled a biblical approach to effective family discipleship. Among other insights in this book, he identifies seven key areas of parental focus: • The Gospel • The Big Story (Biblical Theology) • The Big Truths (Systematic Theology) • The Great Commission • Spiritual Disciplines • Christian Living • Worldview By identifying the right ingredients for family discipleship, and by providing guidelines for creating your own plan of implementation, Intentional Parenting can prepare you for a lifetime of learning and teaching. This is not another book of tactics and techniques. It is a clear, encouraging, accessible book of strategy for parents who want to be intentional about discipleship in the home.



Intentional Parenting

Tricia Simmons

ISBN 978-1604779455

Have you ever wondered, "Where are the scriptures to help me as a parent?" Do you desire for your child to grow up loving God and making good choices? If so, this great little book is full of big truths that encourage parents to teach their children diligently (Deut. 6:7). Through examples from God's Word,

you will discover timeless principles that benefit every family, no matter the age of your child. Tricia Simmons is a wife, mom, teacher, and child of God. As a mother of two, aunt to dozens, and nearly two decades as a children's minister, she has experienced the need for intentional parenting.

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