

Sunday Leftovers

Sermon Title: It Starts at Home

What's this message about – One of our most important responsibilities, as parents, is the spiritual formation of our children. There is no more important calling in our life. If we want our children to catch our faith, it will take constant, intentional attention in this area. If we expect our efforts to have a lasting impact, our children need to hear us talk about our faith, watch us live it, and feel the love that is a product of practicing what we preach. Demonstrating the idea of forgiveness by asking for it, consciously refraining from and discouraging gossip, and even making an extra effort to serve the poor, as a family, are examples of living out our faith with our children. Bottom line is that our children see us as a role model and guide, not a travel agent. Your parenting will provide one of the most powerful and guiding images of who God is for the rest of their life. But, before you start to feel inadequate or overwhelmed, know that your church is in this with you. We want to equip you, not do it for you but to provide you with the tools and encouragement you need to help make an eternal difference in the lives of your children.

Questions for discussion:

- *What do you think was the main point of Matt's message?*
- *Why do you think God gave parents the primary responsibility for the spiritual formation of their children? (Deuteronomy 6:4-6)*
- *Since we all play an active role in the lives of children whether they are our own, nieces and nephews or children we come in contact with, each of us can and do play a role in their spiritual formation. In what ways can we play a more intentional, positive role in in this area?*
- *How would your relationship with the children in your sphere of influence change their understanding of God if you lived out your faith by: asking them for forgiveness, asking their opinion on something important, or even inviting them to help you to help others?*

Do something about it:

Spiritual formation in children is not an overnight endeavor. Truth be told: "You give what you live!" It will take time and consistent effort on our part to help them to realize that we really believe what we are trying to teach them. This week, look for an opportunity to demonstrate forgiveness, trust, and/or caring for others by inviting and including your children into these teachable moments.

Digging deeper:

Deuteronomy 6:4-6; Joshua 24:15; Proverbs 22:6; Acts 16:33,34; Ephesians 6:1-4