



CHURCH COMMUNICATION NETWORK
HOMEWORD MARRIAGE AND FAMILY SERIES

Becoming a Confident Parent

Featuring

Dr. Jim Burns

President and Founder, HomeWord

*Author of books including Ten Building Blocks for a Happy Family
and Confident Parenting*

Elisa Morgan

President and CEO of MOPS International (Mothers of Preschoolers)

Author and co-author of books including What Every Mom Needs

Dr. John Townsend

Clinical psychologist

Author/coauthor, Raising Great Kids and Boundaries with Teens

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Dr. Jim Burns: Our Families and Crisis Mode Living

Margin

Families are overcommitted and underconnected

The Overload Syndrome Exam

- Have you stopped enjoying life?
- Have you stopped developing good relationships?
- Are you exhausted most of the time?
- Do you and your spouse have a regular date night?
- Do you have credit problems or a large debt load?
- Do you get enough sleep?
- Does your family have dinner together on a regular basis?
- Do you take a restful day off?
- Do you have regular family time together?
- Have you started serving God out of duty?
- Are your children showing signs of stress?

Margin is the space that once existed between our load and our limits. Margin is the space between vitality and exhaustion. It is our breathing room, our reserves, our leeway... But unfortunately few of us have any room for margin in our overcommitted, crisis-filled lives.
—Richard Swenson, Margin

We need a solid foundation: how do we keep our families from crashing?

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the storms rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the storms rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

—Matthew 7:24-27 (NIV)

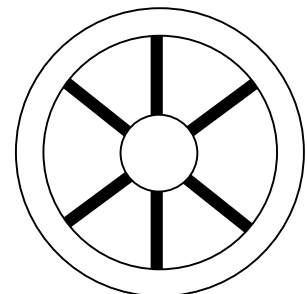
Breaking the chain of dysfunction

We need to move away from crisis-mode living

They were so absorbed in their "God projects" that they didn't notice God right in front of them, like a huge rock in the middle of the road. And so they stumbled into him and went sprawling.
—Romans 9:32, *The Message*

Eliminate and concentrate

Relight the fire in your soul: Luke 6:12-17



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Rest and relax: even God did!

In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.
—Genesis 2:2

Three questions:

- Do I like the person I'm becoming?
- Is the work of God I'm doing destroying the work of God in me?
- Am I giving my family only my emotional scraps?

Energizing your family's spiritual growth

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon 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. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

—Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Our job as parents: to teach our kids fidelity and faithfulness to God

How are you doing with your own faith?

- Are you spending time with God?
- Do you have a supportive spiritual accountability relationship?
- Who has access to your soul?
- Do you have mentors?
- How is your supportive spiritual accountability relationship with your spouse?

Action steps

- Have people speaking spiritually into your children's lives
- Create a family constitution: what values does our family want to hold and be known for?
- Have regular family spiritual times together: see Six Spiritual Activities (last page of handout)
- Develop family renewal times
- Find opportunities as a family to serve
- Let your kids know that they're loved and that you're proud of them

Sample Family Constitution

1. Honor
2. Support and Encouragement
3. Trust
4. Time Together
5. Truthfulness and Integrity
6. Sharing and Generosity
7. Fruit of the Spirit - *Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-control*
8. Follow our Moral Code
9. Respect

Break—15 minutes

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Elisa Morgan: Imperfect Parenting

God will make us enough for what our children need

We can be confident, even though we'll mess up

Jesus promises he will not leave us comfortless

*[The Holy Spirit] lives with you
and will be in you.
—John 14:17*

You are loved

“He loves me, he loves me not”

We can't parent well on a wobbly foundation of love

God's love for us is truly stunning

Living as lovable ones changes our parenting

We can model God's love

*But because of his great love for us,
God, who is rich in mercy, made us
alive with Christ even when we were
dead in transgressions—it is by grace
you have been saved. And God raised
us up with Christ and seated us with
him in the heavenly realms in Christ
Jesus, in order that in the coming ages
he might show the incomparable
riches of his grace, expressed in his
kindness to us in Christ Jesus.
—Ephesians 2:4-7*

*But God demonstrates his own love
for us in this: While we were still
sinners, Christ died for us.
—Romans 5:8*

You are chosen

God doesn't make mistakes

God perfectly matches kids with parents

*“...I prayed for this child, and the
LORD has granted me what I
asked of him. So now I give him to
the LORD. For his whole life he will
be given over to the LORD.”
—1 Samuel 1:27-28*

*For you created my inmost
being... your eyes saw my
unformed body. All the days
ordained for me were written in
your book before one of them
came to be.
—Psalm 139:13, 16*

You matter

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon 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. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

—Deuteronomy 6:4-9

You don't have to have all the answers: let your deficits be your offering

We're called to steward our children

Invest also in each other, in your family, in your community

You matter because of what you invest, not because of the results

You are not alone

God will not leave us alone in this

From God's perspective, it all lines up

He lives with you, and he will be in you

Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.
—Joshua 1:9

Break—10 minutes

Dr. John Townsend: Raising Great Kids

The biblical goal of parenting

Parenting: the only relationship designed by God where the goal is separation

Parenting is about tomorrow

This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.
—Genesis 2:24

There are six character traits that every child needs

Connectedness

Connectedness: the ability to make deep attachments

People are the delivery system of grace

To teach connectedness:

Bring it down to their level

Be there when they are in pain

“Stop, drop, and connect”

As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.
—1 Peter 4:10

...rooted and grounded in love
—Ephesians 3:17

Responsibility

Responsibility: the ability to say that my life is my problem

Show kids there are boundaries: property lines and house rules

Find out what your child is invested in, and take it away

Learning to live in reality

“I’m not perfect; my family’s not perfect; the world’s not perfect”

Help kids see that the world is not perfect, but it’s okay

The solution for perfectionism is love

Kids blame others because they can’t tolerate the condemnation they feel

Competence

Competence: God’s design for us as working, task-based people

Figure out what kids are capable of at their age

You want them to think being industrious is a good thing

Morality

Morality: a system of thinking about good and bad, right and wrong

You want kids to have a biblical, love-based moral system

Every kid needs to learn that there’s a “no-no” in life

A moral system doesn’t put them in jail, it frees them

Worship

Help your child relate to God in developmentally appropriate ways

Make sure your kid is in a healthy church with a healthy youth group

Resources

Confident Parenting

by Jim Burns

www.HomeWord.com

“HomeWord”

www.HomeWord.com

Resources on media and parenting plus information on Dr. Burns’s daily radio program

MOPS International

(Mothers of Preschoolers)

www.MOPS.org

What Every Mom Needs

by Elisa Morgan

www.MOPShop.org

Boundaries with Teens

by John Townsend

www.cloudtownsend.com

Raising Great Kids

by Henry Cloud and John Townsend

www.cloudtownsend.com

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Six Spiritual Activities

1. Affirmation Bombardment

Give words of affirmation and encouragement to each family member one at a time. Some families like to write out three positive encouraging words about each person, share them verbally, and then give the person the papers when finished.

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another and all the more as you see the Day approaching.
—Hebrews 10:24, 25

2. Thank Therapy

Have each family member write out 10 reasons why they are thankful and then share their reasons for thankfulness with each other.

Give thanks in all circumstances for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
—1 Thessalonians 5:18

3. Confession of Sin

According to this scripture, as we confess our sins God forgives us and absolutely cleanses us from that sin. Take a moment to have each family member write out on a piece of paper (privately) their sins that come to mind. Have them fold up the paper and place them in a safe container. Then burn the papers to signify that God forgives our sins and wipes our slate clean.

Have each family member pray a prayer of thanksgiving for the forgiveness of sin.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.
—1 John 1:9

4. The Encouragement Project

As a family, choose someone who needs a little encouragement and come up with an idea to bring joy to someone else's life. Our family decided to write notes of encouragement to a woman who had lost her husband a year earlier.

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.
—John 13:34

5. Rock of Remembrance

Read these scriptures. What do they say about God? How does this apply to your life?

Many references in the Old Testament show that when the people of Israel had an encounter with God, they would build an altar of rocks to remember God's presence. Have each family member find a rock and then use the rock as a significant commitment to God. Some people use the rock as a way of giving over to the Lord a specific fear or sin. Place the rock in a visible place as a way of remembering this special commitment and time with God.

He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.
—Deuteronomy 32:4

The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
—Psalm 18:2

6. Jenna and Her Non-Christian Date

Jenna has been raised in a Christian home all of her life by "some of the strictest parents in the world." Now that she is 16 years old they are finally giving her the opportunity to date but the last conversation with them really bugged her. A very nice looking guy came to pick up Jenna to take her to a high school basketball game and then to the dance after the game in the school gym. He was very polite to Jenna's parents and got her home right on time. The next day Jenna's mom asked Jenna if her date was a Christian. Jenna immediately got defensive and told her mom that it was none of her business and that he might not be a Christian but he was very nice and that she liked him a lot.

That evening Jenna's mom and dad sat down with her after dinner and said, "We want you to know we believe it is biblically correct for Christians to date only other Christians." Jenna's response was, "Mom, you married Dad before he was a Christian and then he became a believer. Isn't that a double standard?"

1. If you were giving advice to Jenna what would you tell her?
2. How well did the parents do in this situation?
3. How do you respond to this statement? "It is biblically correct for Christians to only date other Christians."
__AGREE __DISAGREE __UNDECIDED Explain why.
4. How do you interpret 1 Corinthians 6:13-15 according to Jenna's situation?

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?
—II Corinthians 6:13-15