

DISCIPLE-MAKING AT HOME: STARTING WITH WHY – PART 2

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When I share with parents the importance of modeling while leading their children in family devotion and spiritual growth, some of them cast suspicious eyes. They are skeptical since their children frequently argue with them about going to church and Christianity. They wonder how and when **Deuteronomy 6:20-25** will ever happen in their homes.

In the book "Surviving Your Child's Adolescence," a psychologist suggests that many parents underestimate how closely they are observed and how often they are evaluated by their children. Children under 10 worship their parents. However, during adolescence, they stop idolizing their parents and kick them off the pedestal in their pursuit of new identity. Also, they begin rejecting their child status and the old life style on their path to gain independence. Along the way, as teens shed their past, they will become more critical of parents and their previous influences and teaching. Therefore, conflicts inevitably arise as teens seek to gain more freedom, and parents feel like challenged or even threatened.

One example of becoming independent is that many teens have followed parents going to church for years. As they start to think for themselves, they begin to question why. What is this faith? Nonetheless, question at this stage is positive. As the youth progress from second hand faith that comes from the parents, they seek answers to their doubts so that they can form first hand faith on their own. For instance, they themselves decide to go to church on their own term because of their own faith. This is a faith journey that many church youth have to wrestle with and go through.



Question that children raise in **Deuteronomy 6:20** is a golden opportunity for parents like you to share your own faith journey, how real God is in your lives, and the gospel. Of course, the children may have more questions, and you will need to guide and encourage them on their own faith journey. Disciple-making at home is a journey, and home is where the whole process begins. Family devotion is one way for everyone to talk about God and share their thoughts. CS Lewis once said, "The task of the modern educator is not to cut down jungles but to irrigate deserts."



To understand more about your teenage children, you could check out these two web sites that are designed to help you to understand more about the teen culture. Also, they offer resources and advice to engage your children in faith conversations:

- www.axis.org
- www.cpyu.org (Centre for Parent/Youth Understanding)

To grow spiritually, check out the Pastor's Corner (<https://emc.ecac.ca/pastors-corner/>) and JMC's Devotions (<https://emc.ecac.ca/jmc-devotionals/>).

Please come back next week and read another article in this series: Disciple-making at Home.