



from the desk of

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The great Parent Power that you have!

The time in the Old Testament is after the Exodus from Egypt. The wandering in the wilderness is now past and the people are getting ready to cross the Jordan and enter the Promised Land. To prepare them for that, Moses gets ready to review the 10 Commandments for the people. However, just prior to this Moses has the following advice – and mentions the teaching of children (twice) and even teaching grandchildren God’s Word:

Deuteronomy 4:9-10 (NIV)

⁹ Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live.

Teach them to your children and to their children after them.

¹⁰ Remember the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb^[1], when he said to me, "Assemble the people before me to hear my words so that they may learn to revere me as long as they live in the land and may **teach them to their children.**"

Now, all these years later, research bears out the reason for God directing Moses to contend that what you do as a parent is important. Consider the following:

The holy grail for helping youth remain religiously active as young adults has been at home all along: Parents.

Mothers and fathers who practice what they preach and preach what they practice are far and away the major influence related to adolescents keeping

^[1] Mt. Horeb is another name for Mt. Sinai, the place where God gave Moses the 10 Commandments.

the faith into their 20s, according to new findings from a landmark study of youth and religion.

Just 1 percent of teens ages 15 to 17 raised by parents who attached little importance to religion were highly religious in their mid- to late 20s.

In contrast, 82 percent of children raised by parents who talked about faith at home, attached great importance to their beliefs and were active in their congregations were themselves religiously active as young adults, according to data from the latest wave of the [National Study of Youth and Religion](http://www.thearda.com/Archive/NSYR.asp). (<http://www.thearda.com/Archive/NSYR.asp>).

The connection is "nearly deterministic," said University of Notre Dame Sociologist Christian Smith, lead researcher for the study.

Other factors such as youth ministry or clergy or service projects or religious schools pale in comparison.

"No other conceivable causal influence ... comes remotely close to matching the influence of parents on the religious faith and practices of youth," Smith said in a recent talk sharing the findings at Yale Divinity School. "Parents just dominate."

(Taken from <http://blogs.thearda.com/trend/featured/parents-no-1-influence-helping-teens-remain-religiously-active-as-young-adults/>)

Faith is often as much caught as taught. What your children see as important in your life they will most likely take on as important in their lives.

So the message this week is about being an influence simply by modeling an active faith – and how the religious shadow you cast is enormous. It's another way the Holy Spirit uses to develop the faith of your teen or teen to be.

So what do you do on a daily or weekly basis that models an active faith? What do you do to show your children the importance of faith in your life?

Next week – how to bring your parent power to bear on the religious values and practices of your children.

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