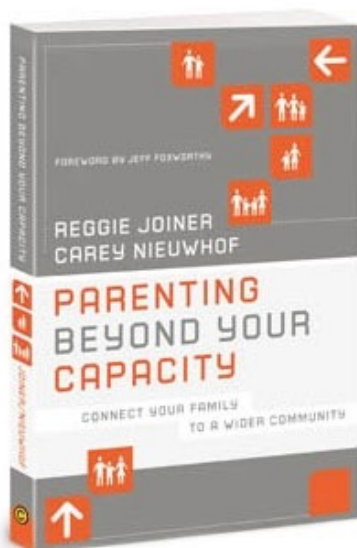


Parenting beyond your capacity

Book Review



This is a book about parenting, but, it's not a parenting self-help book; it's a parenting get-help book. It's about how parents can increase their parenting capacity by engaging their family in God's story to the world. This is not just a book for those who are parents though. It also has a wealth of helpful insights for those who are hoping to be parents one day, preparing to be parents, grand parents, those who work with parents or have friends that are parents. Three family truths that the writers want the reader to understand.

Firstly, parents have the most potential to influence their children.

Secondly, parents are not the only influence their children will need.

Thirdly, two combined influences will make a greater impact than just two influences on their own.

These truths form the framework for the '5 Family Values' that will help parents see their family through the context of a bigger story. For each of the values, the authors helpfully use Deuteronomy 6 as a model for parenting. There are also a series of thought provoking discussion questions at the end of each chapter designed to push the reader to apply these values to their own family.

A brief summary of the 5 Family Values are...

Widen the circle: Pursue strategic relationships for your children so they recognize the need to be part of something that is much larger than your family.

Imagine the end: Parents should ask the question 'Who do you want your child to become?'

Fight for the heart: Parents need to build a relationship with their child that is trustworthy. Pass on an understanding of God relationally and in love.

Create a rhythm: Things that become part of the daily rhythm are the things our families will come to believe are most important. Is God at the center of your family rhythm? Consider how you might utilize already existing rhythms - such as eating meals together; walking or traveling together; bedtime; getting up in the morning - to build the faith of children and young people.

Make it personal: Before you can ask who your children are becoming, you have to examine who you are becoming. Your relationship with God will directly impact your children. Is your relationship with God growing, authentic and personal.

Throughout the book, the authors encourage parents to be intentional and proactive in engaging their family in their church family. This is a real strength of the book. I feel like there has been a lot of talk lately about what churches can do to best partner with families. But this book comes from the perspective of parents and the steps they can take to connect their children with the church. The relationship between families and churches is, after all a partnership.