

# DISCIPLESHIP

Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

**Matthew 28:19-20**

Discipleship is done in relationship. It involves both formal and informal elements: reading and studying the Bible together, and everyday faith conversations and modelling what a vibrant relationship with God looks like.



Many churches equate discipleship with knowledge... but the essence of discipleship is **transformational not informational**. Jesus did not merely ask us to teach everything he commanded. He asked us to teach people to obey everything he commanded, and the difference is massive (Matt. 28:19). The end result of discipleship is not merely the knowledge of all Jesus commanded but the obedience to all Jesus commanded.

- Eric Geiger



Rachel Turner, in her book *Parenting Children for a Life of Faith* explains the difference between a God smart child and a God connected child:

A God smart child:	A God connected child:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knows the right answers off the top of their head</li> <li>• Can easily pray out loud</li> <li>• Knows their memory verses and lots of Bible stories</li> <li>• Knows the rules for Christian living, and knows the rituals of church life</li> <li>• Is comfortable with how to do Christianity but it all seems to stop at their head</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has something extra, beyond head knowledge</li> <li>• Lives in a vibrant two-way relationship with God</li> <li>• Shares life with God, play with him and interact with him throughout the day</li> <li>• Know they are loved by him—the living God is in their daily reality</li> <li>• Their head knowledge of God is just a part of discovering a lifelong heart connection with him</li> </ul>

We want the children we work with to love Jesus for the rest of their lives, to be God connected kids. Discipleship in Children’s Ministry is a partnership between parents and the church.

Partnership is about working together; it’s about filling the gaps and deficits of the other.

**Some questions to ponder:**

What do the children in your church most need in order to become resilient disciples?

How could you refocus your energy towards discipleship rather than just running a Sunday programme?

If you were to design a Child Discipleship Pathway for the children in your ministry, what might that look like?

What is the place of parents in the discipleship pathway?

## RESOURCES

Here are some websites and articles to help you think about discipleship with children.

### Gospel Project Articles

This article from the Gospel Project provides 8 tips to help you think about discipling children

8 TIPS TO HELP YOU  
DISCIPLE YOUR KIDS



This article describes how discipleship at home is more than family devotions.

DISCIPLING YOUR KIDS  
IS MORE THAN FAMILY



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### discipleblog.com Articles

This blog has some great articles about discipleship with children. Here are a few good ones to get you started:

WHAT KIDS REALLY  
NEED



6 KEYS TO DISCIPLE  
CHILDREN ACCORDING TO  
JESUS



WHAT KIDS REALLY  
NEED



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### Resilient Disciples

This website talks about how we make resilient child disciples with spine and heart to stand up against the pressure of culture.

RESILIENT  
DISCIPLES



They also have a book called *Resilient: Child discipleship and the fearless future of the church* by Chris Manchard, Matt Markins and Mike Handler.

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### Refocus Ministry

This ministry has some great practical ideas for families to engage with discipleship at home.

PRACTICAL DISCIPLESHIP  
AT HOME



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### Parenting for Faith

This website has great articles and practical tips for equipping parents to raise God connected kids.

PARENTING FOR  
FAITH

