



What if your circle was bigger?// Jeff Brodie // September 29, 2024

Scripture: [Deuteronomy 6:3 NLT](#); [1 Samuel 16:1-13 NLT](#); [1 Timothy 4:12 NLT](#)

Bottom Line: Parents are the most important spiritual influence in the life of a child, but they aren't the only influence a child needs.

Discuss:

Reminder: The goal is always a good discussion, not completing every question. Use these as a tool to help.

1. When you look at the loneliness and lack of meaning that is growing in the younger generations in our culture, how does it make you feel? How do you want to respond?
2. When you look at your own life, where do you feel like you found real community?
3. Who are the individuals who have invested in you spiritually in your life? What did they teach you with their words or the way they lived?
4. Read [1 Samuel 16:1-13 NLT](#). Looking at verse 7b, Samuel gives us a glimpse of how God sees people. Why do you think it's so tempting to judge by outward appearance, behaviour, or performance? How do you think we sometimes do this with kids?
5. Would you say you are the type of person who speaks spiritual encouragement to kids or prays over the kids in your life (even if they aren't your kids)? Why do you think that the words of someone who isn't a child's parent carry a different kind of weight or impact?
6. Have you ever prayed for insight into the heart of someone? If a child you loved was standing in front of you now, what would you tell them about how God sees them?
7. Studies from Lifeway and the Fuller Institute both demonstrated that when 5 or more adults (outside of parents) spiritually invest in the life of a child/teen they are more likely to attend church as an adult. Does this inspire you? Does it cause you to think about your role in the lives of kids, who aren't your kids, differently?
8. Who is someone in your life today who calls out the work and image of God in your life? If you can name the person/people, how has that benefited your spiritual life?

9. Read [1 Timothy 4:12 NLT](#). Think of a child in your life who would be encouraged by this message that Paul wrote to Timothy when he was younger. Write the message in a card, in a text, or on a piece of artwork and send it to them as an opportunity to point them to God our Father who loves them and wants to work in their life.

Moving Forward:

This week, choose one child/teenager/adult child in your life to pray for and make a plan to spiritually invest in them regularly. Make this a regular part of your schedule and put it in your calendar.