

APPENDIX A

THE TEN ENVIRONMENTS

1. **Storytelling.** The Big God Story gives us an accurate and awe-inspiring perspective into how God has been moving throughout history. It is the story of redemption, salvation, and hope and tells how we have been grafted into it by grace. It further compels us to see how God is using every person's life and is creating a unique story that deserves to be told for His glory.

“God has a big story, and I can be a part of it!”

2. **Identity.** This environment highlights who we are in Christ. According to Ephesians 1, we have been chosen, adopted, redeemed, sealed, and given an inheritance in Christ—all of which we did nothing to earn. This conviction allows children to stand firm against the destructive counter-identities the world will offer.

“I belong to God, and He loves me!”

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- 3. Faith Community.** God designed us to live in community and to experience Him in ways that can happen only in proximity to one another. The faith community creates an environment to equip and disciple parents, to celebrate God's faithfulness, and to bring a richness of worship through tradition and rituals that offer children an identity. Our love for each other reflects the love we have received from God.

“God’s family cares for each other and worships God together.”

- 4. Service.** This posture of the heart asks the question “What needs to be done?” It allows the Holy Spirit to cultivate in us a sensitivity to others and focuses on a cause bigger than one individual life. It helps fulfill the mandate that as Christ-followers we are to view our lives as living sacrifices that we generously give away.

“What needs to be done?”

- 5. Out of the Comfort Zone.** As children and students are challenged to step out of their comfort zone from an early age, they experience a dependence on the Holy Spirit to equip and strengthen them beyond their natural abilities and desires. We believe this environment will cultivate a generation

that, instead of seeking comfort, seeks a radical life of faith in Christ.

“God transforms me when I step out in faith.”

- 6. Responsibility.** This environment captures the ability to take ownership for one’s life, gifts, and resources before God. A child must be challenged to take responsibility for his or her brothers and sisters in Christ, as well as for those who are spiritually lost. We hope the Holy Spirit will use this environment to allow each child to understand that God has entrusted His world to us.

“God has entrusted me with the things and people He created around me.”

- 7. Course Correction.** This environment flows out of Hebrews 12:11–13 and is the direct opposite of punishment. Instead, biblical discipline for a child encompasses a season of pain, building up in love, and a vision of a corrected path for the individual with the purpose of healing at its core.

“When I get off track, God offers me a path of healing.”

- 8. Love and Respect.** Without love, our faith is futile. Children need an environment of love and

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respect in order to be free to both receive and give God's grace. This environment declares that children are respected because they embody the image of God. We must speak *to* them, not *at* them, and we must commit to an environment where love and acceptance are never withheld due to one's behavior.

"God fills me with His love so I can give it away."

- 9. Knowing.** Nothing could be more important than knowing and being known by God. We live in a world that denies absolute truth, yet God's Word offers just that. As we create an environment that upholds and displays God's truth, we give children a foundation based on knowing God, His Word, and a relationship with Him through Christ. God is holy, mighty, and awesome, yet He has chosen to make Himself known to us!

"God knows me, and I can know Him."

- 10. Modeling.** Biblical content needs a practical, living expression in order for it to be spiritually influential. This environment gives hands-on examples of what it means for children to put their faith into action. Modeling puts flesh on

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faith and reminds us that others are watching to see if we live what we believe.

“I see Christ in others, and they can see Him in me.”

APPENDIX B

IMPLEMENTING A SPIRITUAL FORMATION APPROACH TO FAMILY MINISTRY

As you begin to implement a spiritual formation approach to family ministry in your church, the following questions may be useful in these various discussions:

Church Staff and Volunteers

- In what ways will we need to structure our weekends to accommodate creating space for our children/students to experience God and His Word?
- How will we communicate these goals to our parents and children/students?
- How will this affect the overall annual calendar?
- Are there any events, practices, curriculum, or structures that *violate* these principles? If so, what are they? How will we go about revising or eliminating them?

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- Are there any events, practices, curriculum, or structures that are *missing* that would support these principles?
- What are we *willing* to give up or sacrifice in order to make this a reality?
- What are we *unwilling* to give up or sacrifice?
- In what ways have we been unintentionally blinded by tradition, existing practices, or curriculum that we need to abandon immediately?
- How can we ensure that we are not merely adding on spiritual formation and family ministry, but that we are fundamentally adopting a new approach to thinking and being?

Parents

- How will parents need to be inspired by this philosophical direction? Who is responsible for this inspiration, and how will it be unveiled and executed?
- How will parents need to be equipped? What kinds of events, information, and opportunities will be available to ensure that every parent understands the philosophy and has the opportunity to be empowered to implement it in their home?
- What resources will be needed to equip and support our parents? Financial? Time? Staff? Outside speakers/resources? Curriculum? Website?

- What specifically will be expected from our parents?
- How will we communicate with our parents on a regular basis and give them updates?
- How will parents offer feedback to us?

Children/Students

- How will we inspire and communicate a new path of spiritual formation to our children/students?
- In what ways will we adapt our language in order to make sure that all grades participate and understand the path before them?
- What are the desired outcomes of our children/student communities in this paradigm?
- In what way will we solicit feedback from them, if any?
- How will we discern the diverse but complimentary roles of church and home in this model? Who will be responsible for articulating each role in the life of a child/student?