



Refresh your

PARENTING

in just 5 days!

BY LAURA KUEHN, LCSW

corners  **ones**
for **parents**

DISCLAIMER

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Refresh Your Parenting in Just 5 Days by Laura Kuehn, LCSW

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INTRODUCTION

Do you feel like you could use a reset button for your parenting? Are you struggling to be effective? Do you no longer enjoy your kids or your role as a parent? If so, this ebook is for you.

However, it's not a miracle cure. I cannot promise a complete transformation by the end of the five days. You will still have questions. There will still be struggles.

But what you will gain is a framework for change- a framework to help you build your parenting from the bottom up.

We will be exploring **The Five Pillars of Christian Parenting**. These pillars, when built upon a solid foundation of faith, can provide the support you need to keep going, even when things get hard. They will give you direction when you feel lost and a vision for the future when the path seems obscured. The Five Pillars are:

- 1) KNOWING YOUR CHILD
- 2) CONNECTING WITH YOUR CHILD
- 3) DISCIPLING YOUR CHILD
- 4) CORRECTING AND TRAINING YOUR CHILD
- 5) BUILDING A PARENTAL SUPPORT NETWORK

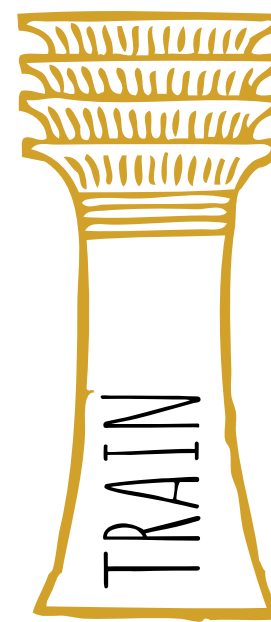
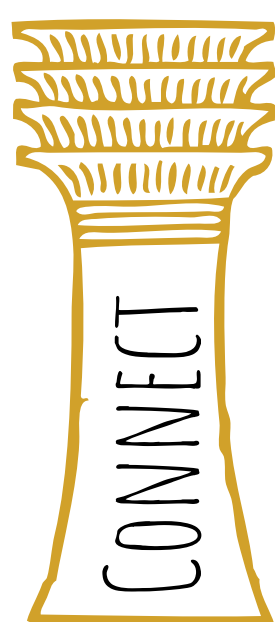
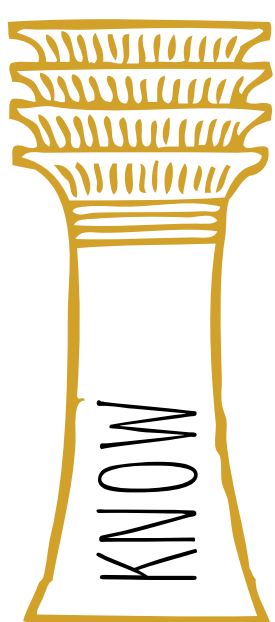
We are going to dip our toes into each one of these areas over the next five days. You will be given a task in the morning and space for reflection on those tasks in the evening. You will get a taste for each of the pillars and start to learn how you can incorporate them into your parenting, brick by brick.

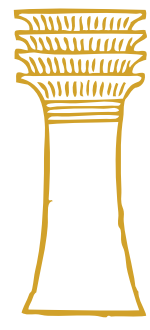
Make sure you set yourself up for success. When deciding on when to start, look ahead at the next five days in your calendar. You are not looking for a wide open schedule, but just be sure there are no major events scheduled in the next five days so you can focus on the tasks at hand.

Set your alarm for 10-15 minutes earlier to give yourself ample time to prepare for the activities of the day. Before you begin, pray and ask God to use this ebook to refresh your parenting.

LET'S DIG IN!

THE FIVE PILLARS OF CHRISTIAN PARENTING



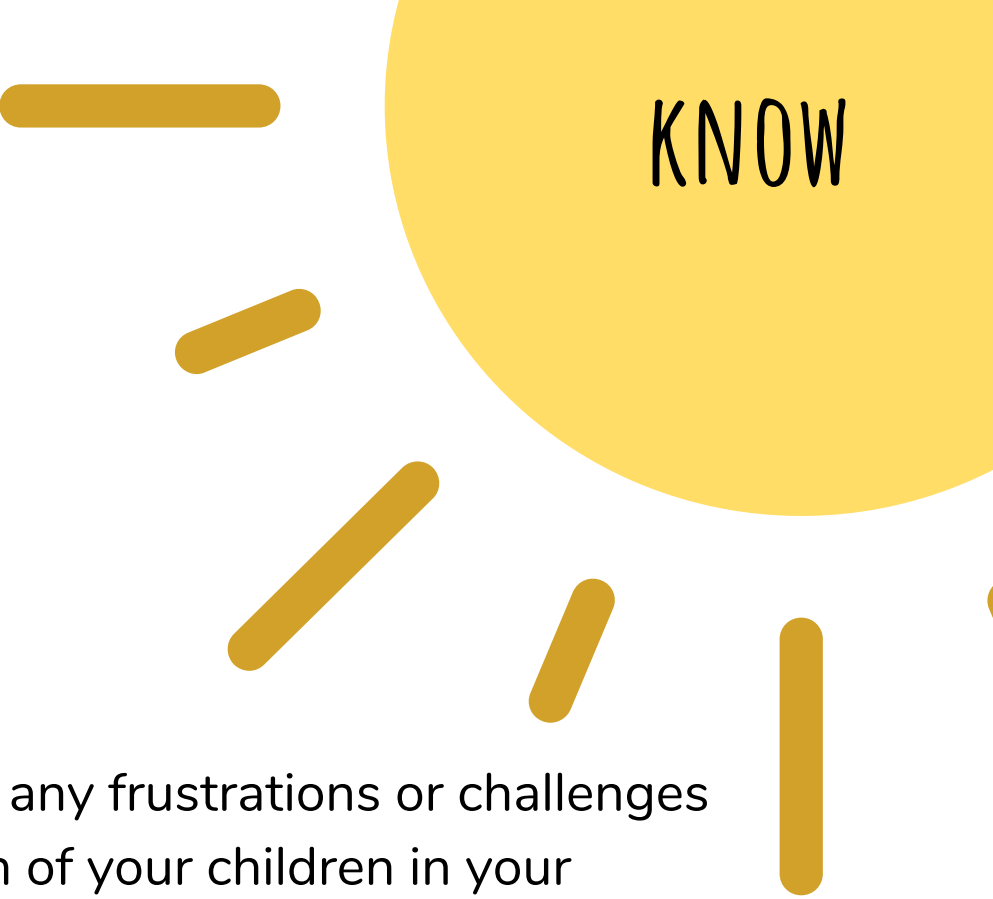


PILLAR #1:

KNOW YOUR CHILD



DAY 1 - MORNING



As you wake up this morning, before you set foot out of bed, before any frustrations or challenges creep in, take a deep breath and spend a few minutes picturing each of your children in your mind.

What snapshots came to mind? Maybe you got a picture of your athletic son in his football jersey, or your quiet daughter with her head in a book. Or maybe you saw your goofy toddler’s smiling face covered in chocolate. You already know that your kids are all unique, but today you are going to dig deeper. You are going to take a look into their hearts.

Look over the chart below. As you go through your day, add some notes about each of your children. Consider setting an alarm on your phone to remind you to be on the lookout for the answers to these questions.

Question	Child 1:	Child 2:	Child 3:
What brings a smile to my children’s faces? (Is it people? Activities? Things? Achievements?)			
How do my children respond to correction? (Are they sorry? Defensive? Explosive? Indifferent?)			
What motivates my kids? (Are they externally or internally motivated? Do they seek attention? Sympathy? Control? Revenge?)			
How do they recharge? (Do they need time alone? Do they need to be with others? Did they have enough opportunities today?)			

At some point today, try to sit and compassionately and unobtrusively observe each of your children. Peel away the layers of frustration that may have accumulated and simply try to see them through the eyes of their Heavenly Father. What do you see?

Child 1:

Child 2:

Child 3:

DAY 1 - NIGHT

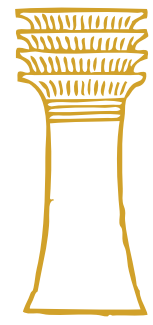
What surprised you as you studied your children today? What is one change you could make that would help you understand your children on a deeper level?

What did you learn about what might be ruling your children's hearts? (pride, peace, selfishness, joy, fear, desire for things)

How might the regular practice of "compassionate observation" help you be a better parent?



Thank you Lord for my children. Help me to better understand how You have wired each of them. They are fearfully and wonderfully made. As I go through these next few days, please help me to remember that I don't have to have all the answers because I can trust that You do. I know You put this family together for a reason, and I trust you that with Your help, I am exactly the parent my kids need. Amen.



PILLAR #2:

CONNECT WITH YOUR CHILD



DAY 2 - MORNING

Often we think about parenting in terms of “us against them.” When tensions are high, it’s easy to see our kids as our enemy. The truth of the matter is that your family is a team. As the parent, you are the coach and your kids are the star players. Players that feel connected, respected, and encouraged by their coaches work hard for them. The same holds true in families.

Yesterday you were in observer mode. Today you are in participant mode. You can use the information you gathered yesterday to inform the actions of today.

Task #1:

Write 2-3 things that you like about each of your children below. These can be strengths, qualities, gifts, or personality traits. If you are in a season of conflict with your child, try to remember back to times when things were not so difficult. Draw on those memories to complete the list.

Child 1:

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

Child 2:

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

Child 3:

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

If you see one of these qualities or traits today, say something!

Here’s an example: Let’s say you admire how thoughtful your son is. Even if he hasn’t been so thoughtful lately, look for little things he does that show you it is still in him. Did he put his dishes in the dishwasher without being asked? Did he thank you for picking him up at school? Point out what you notice when you notice it. Be specific in your feedback. You can say something like, “It was so thoughtful of you to grab the car keys when you saw my hands were full. I appreciate you so much.”

Task #2:

Do one thing with each child today that will add warmth to your relationship. What I mean by that is to do something that will make your child feel like he or she belongs. It may be a cuddle on the couch. It may be doing a chore for them, just because. Or it might be just sitting quietly and compassionately next to them after an outburst to show them they are loved, even when they misbehave. Write down one or two ideas for each child in the chart below. Make time to do at least one with each child today.

Child 1:

Child 2:

Child 3:

DAY 2 - NIGHT

Was it easy or hard for you to point out the positive traits in your children today? If it was hard, what would make it easier for you?

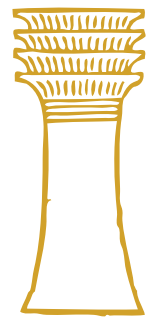
Why do you think affirmation and encouragement are so central to connectedness?

How did your children respond to the time you spent with them today? Did you notice a shift in mood or attitude with your attempt to add warmth? What gets in the way of carving out more moments like these?

Every time you affirm your children, spend quality time with them, or show compassion in the midst of misbehavior, you create a strand of connection and strengthen your relationship. Connection is essential for effective correction.



Thank you Lord for these amazing children you have given me. Thank you for reminding me today how special each one of them is. When I look at Your word, I see that Jesus connected with people before He corrected. I want to be a parent with a heart like Jesus. Help me to make my relationship with my kids a priority. Amen.



PILLAR #3:

DISCIPLE YOUR CHILD

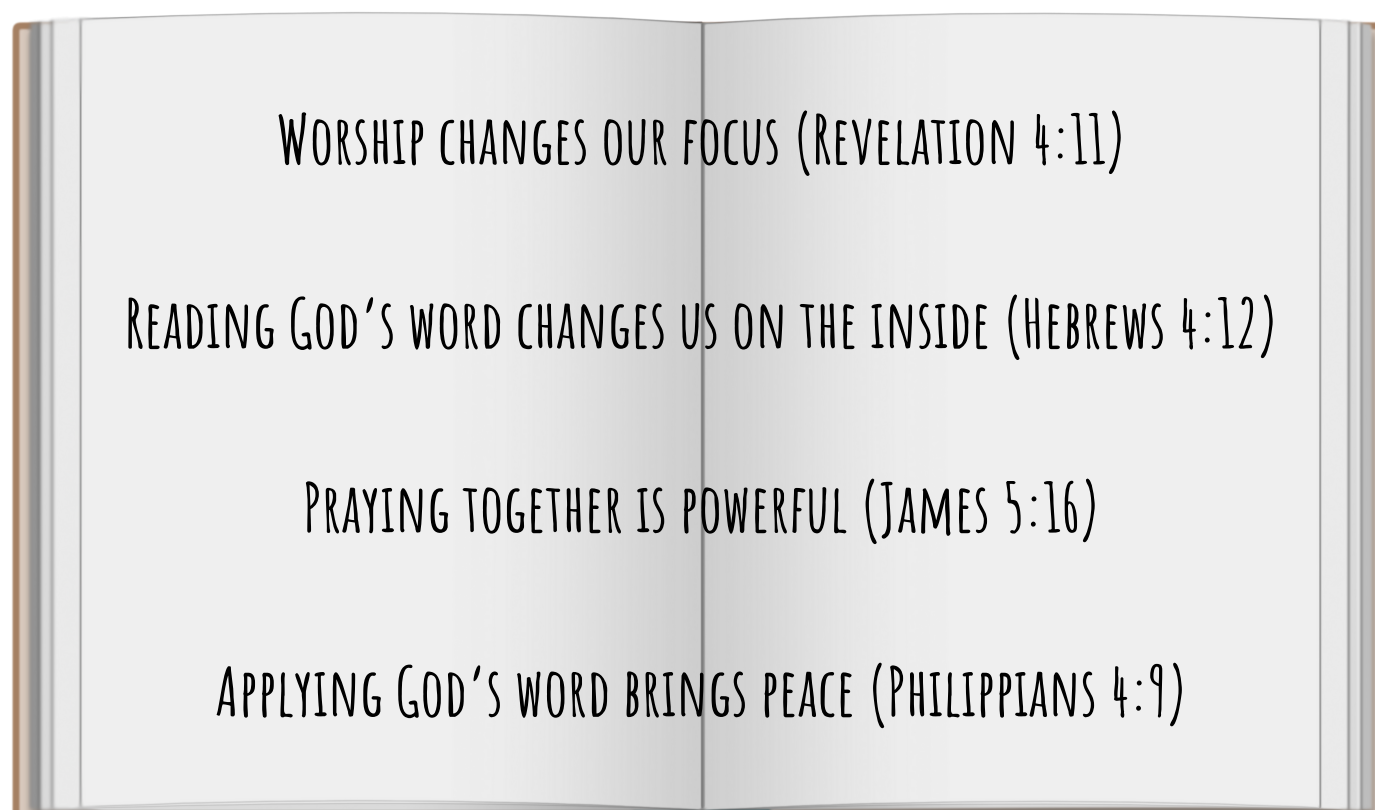


DAY 3 - MORNING

Today you are going to focus on discipleship. From the list below, pick one activity that you are currently NOT doing with your kids that you would like to try to incorporate into your day today.

- ☐ Listen to worship music together.
- ☐ Read a passage from the Bible and discuss (use a version appropriate for your child's level). After, ask: "How can we put this into practice today?" or "What does this passage teach us about what God is like?"
- ☐ Have a family prayer time. Ask each child how you can pray for them. Consider starting a prayer and praise journal.
- ☐ Do a kid's daily devotional (Keys for Kids is a great devotional for younger children).
- ☐ Complete an age-appropriate Bible craft or activity.
- ☐ Investigate and discuss a Bible or theology question (for older kids).

It's not just about checking off a box. It's about explaining to your children why you are doing these things. The Bible is clear about why all of these things are important:



Check off the activity above you plant to do with your kids today. Take a moment to do a little research now. Print out any activity pages you might need, search for a devotional, or find a Bible passage to read and reflect on together.

Here are some links to get you started:

<https://ministry-to-children.com/>

<https://www.keysforkids.org/>

<https://truthforkids.com/>

<https://www.cornerstonesforparents.com>

www.gotquestions.org

DAY 3 - NIGHT

How did your children respond?

What did you enjoy about your activity today? What was hard?

Even if you got a roll of the eyes, keep at it. Start small. Try different activities or approaches until you find something that works for your family. Don't feel guilty if what you do looks different from other families. And remember: you cannot force your children to drink from the well of living water. Your job is simply to surround them with it so that they become thoroughly saturated.

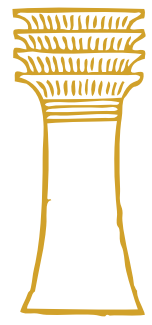
To make a disciple you have to be a disciple. Take a moment to evaluate your own relationship with the Lord.

James 4:8 says, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." Remember: God is a gentleman. He won't break down the walls to your heart. He stands at the door and knocks. He needs you to open the door and let Him in. He desperately wants a deep relationship with you. All you have to do is look to the cross to know this is true.

Think about one change you can make that might help you draw nearer to the Lord in the next month. Write it here:



Heavenly Father, I am grateful for the cross- for the bridge it has built between me and You. More than anything, I want my children to have a personal relationship with You. Help me to disciple them well and point them to You every chance I get. Amen.



PILLAR #4:

TRAIN AND CORRECT YOUR CHILD



DAY 4 - MORNING

This is probably the day you have been waiting for. Discipline seems like the most important job of a parent, but it is just one component. It is not more or less important than any of the other four pillars.

Think about your day ahead. What do you anticipate will be a struggle today?

Pick **one** problem area for **one** child. Write it here:

Now re-word that problem as a positive statement that includes a need.

For example: Instead of writing, “Jimmy throws things when he is angry,” try, “Jimmy needs to learn new ways to express his emotions when he’s upset.”

See the difference?

Write your positively reframed problem here:

Now think of one way you can help your child meet this need today and write it in the box below. You may not be able to stop the troubling behavior, but your goal today is not to stop it. Your goal is to identify a need and work with your child to try to meet that need.

Here’s an example: “I will talk to Jimmy this morning about using a secret “alert word” when he is getting upset, but before it escalates. Together we will create a calm down spot for him to use when he needs it.”

DAY 4- NIGHT

What went well today?

Where did you struggle?

How does reframing misbehavior in terms of needs help you as a parent? What are some other needs that your children have?

Do you tend to be too lenient or too strict? Do you ever discipline to satisfy your own comfort/needs? Write your thoughts about these questions below.



God, I need your help in training and correcting my children. I want to do the right thing but I don't always know what that is. Will you remind me to ask You for help when I am struggling? And please help me to see the challenges I face as an opportunity for growth rather than evidence of failure. I know You are for me. Amen.

PILLAR #5:

CREATE A SUPPORT NETWORK



DAY 5 - MORNING

Every parent needs at least one person in his or her life to help support, encourage and hold them accountable.

Who is that person for you?

What is the hardest thing for you as a parent right now?

Your task today is to ask your support person for prayer about what you wrote in the box above.

Reach out (text, email or phone) and be specific. This prayer request needs to be about YOU, not your child. Ask your support person to hold you up in prayer on that specific issue.

If you don't have someone in your life right now who can be that person for you, spend today thinking about who it could be. If no one comes to mind, ask God to bring someone to mind or to bring someone into your life who could be that person for you. And then be on the lookout for how He will answer.

DAY 5 - NIGHT

How did you feel after you reached out for help?

Are there any barriers for you when it comes to asking for help? What are they?

What is one thing you could do that would help you overcome one of those barriers?



Thank you, Lord, that you have put people in my life to help me on this parenting journey. Give me the courage to reach out for support and prayer. Help me to see that they are Your hands and feet in my life and a reminder that I am never alone. Amen.

CONCLUSION

Now that you are done, which of The Five Pillars of Christian Parenting do you feel most confident with? Which one is the biggest struggle for you? What is one area that you would like to focus on in the next few weeks?

Write your answers to these questions here. Be as specific as possible.

I hope that by now you are feeling refreshed, more equipped, and hopeful. But if instead, you are feeling overwhelmed and weary, I want you to know that is okay. Because when you feel weak, you are actually at your strongest. It gives God a chance to show up and do what He does best: make beauty from ashes.

Parenting seems uniquely designed to throw us at the feet of Jesus. It humbles us, refines us, and shapes us. It is a process that requires we have compassion for ourselves.

Never forget that God is for you and He goes with you.

GOD BLESS YOU AND YOURS,

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