Welcome to Heart-to-Heart!
Faith Formation:
The Shaping of My Child’s Heart

Week 3 | 03.03.14 (PM) | 03.05.14 (AM)
Faith Formation is about Christ being formed in our kids!
We don’t want to confuse information with transformation.
“Faith is established when someone has a firm conviction (not just good information) and has chosen to personally surrender all rights and privileges of his or her life in submission to God, not just to good behavior.”

- Dr. Michelle Anthony, Dreaming of More for the Next Generation
Faith is developed when we experience God in and around us not simply learn about him!
How do we partner with the Holy Spirit to foster Faith Formation in our kids so that Christ is being formed in them?
“We have counted on preaching, teaching and knowledge or information to form faith in the hearer, and counted on faith to form the inner life and outward behavior of the Christian. But, for whatever reason, this strategy has not turned out well. The result is that we have multitudes of professing Christians who well may be ready to die but obviously are not ready to live, and can hardly get along with themselves, let alone with others.” – Dallas Willard, The Great Omission
Colossians 1:29b “… Christ IN us, the hope of glory.”

Hebrews 12:1b-2a “… let us run w/perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith …”

John 1:14 “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”
“Children are a GIFT from the Lord; they are a reward from him.”

Psalm 127:3 (NLT)
Experts tell us that children are typically not capable of setting their own faith course, children generally go in the direction they are led!
“Children learn trust – the experience of faith – through their relationship with their parents. The emotional foundation for all of their latter spiritual growth has been laid, for better or for worse, during the first six years of life.” - Dr. Larry D. Stephens, Your Child’s Faith
When it comes to Faith Formation, a parent’s focus should be on two things when they pray and shepherd their children:

1. Christ being formed in them.

2. The child’s beliefs being marked by Biblical thinking.
How do we teach our children to discern God’s voice?

• Tell children how God is leading you, speaking to you, what He’s showing you in His Word.
• Read the Bible with children as a love story, not a rulebook.
• Train children to read and apply the Bible.
• Make time for children to stop and listen to His voice.
Birth – 15 months:
Initial Faith in God
15 months – 3 years:
Internalizing God’s Unconditional Love
“Toddlerhood presents a need for a child to be independent, wanting to do everything himself. It is part of the toddler’s God-given drive to set himself apart as an individual. Avoid taking the toddler’s frustration, independence or conflict personally. React on an adult level, not the child’s level. Stay above the fray. If you trade anger for anger and frustration for frustration, you will evoke shame and low self-wroth in your toddler.” - Dr. Larry D. Stephens
3 – 6 years:
Internalizing God’s Grace
6 - 12 years:
A Healthy Image of God
“If that statistic was accurate in the past, it no longer depicts U.S. society. The current Barna study indicates that nearly half of all Americans who follow Jesus Christ do so before reaching the age of 13 (43%).”

- George Barna
12 - 21 years:
Spiritual Identity
“It is important that your teenager experience you, the parent as a reliable source of help, wisdom, integrity and affirmation throughout the stages of his emotional and spiritual development, so that he will look to you and to God as a guide in his search for meaning.”

– Dr. Larry D. Stephens, Your Child’s Faith
21 years and older:
Personal Initimacy with God
“The tongue has the power of life and death …”

Proverbs 18:2a