



Raising Passionate Jesus Followers: The Power of Intentional Parenting

Phil Comer

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For Christian parents, there is no greater joy than seeing their children learn to walk with the Lord. And there is no greater fear than that their children will walk away from God.

After serving together in pastoral ministry for forty years, Phil and Diane Comer know those hopes and fears well. Thirty-seven years ago, they became parents themselves. And like all new parents, they were intimidated and unsure about how to take on the task of spiritually training their young children.

Now, with all four of their children grown and establishing their own households of faith, Phil and Diane have embarked on a quest to help the next generation of parents raise passionate Jesus followers. Drawing on years of pastoral counseling, teaching, leading, and decades of watching families from the perspective of pastors and leaders in ministry, Phil and Diane instruct, guide, encourage, and offer hope and practical help to Christian parents.

Raising Passionate Jesus Followers is a manual full of practical, biblically based guidelines that parents will be able to turn to again and again through each stage of their children's development. Starting at birth, into grade school, through the daunting teenage years, to launching them into college, and finally letting go, this book contains the why's and the how's parents need. This book will serve as an invaluable resource for any parent whose greatest longing is to shepherd their children into a vibrant faith in God.

Raising Passionate Jesus Followers: The Power of Intentional Parenting Details

Date : Published March 6th 2018 by Zondervan
ISBN : 9780310347774
Author : Phil Comer
Format : Paperback 304 pages
Genre : Parenting, Christian, Nonfiction, Religion, Faith

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From Reader Review Raising Passionate Jesus Followers: The Power of Intentional Parenting for online ebook

Natalie Herr says

Excellent parenting book. The Comers weave biblical truth and practical helps together in a way I've never seen before. I would recommend to any parent!

Colette Hoekstra says

I thoroughly enjoyed this perspective on parenting. The Comers are a breath of fresh air, with real life examples to back their parenting advice. Solid, biblical teaching that gave me the courage and inspiration to keep going!

Karl Dumas says

My son is a young adult, so I missed out on many of the stages that the Comers write about in Raising Passionate Jesus Followers: the Power of Intentional Parenting (Zondervan, 2018). But I have to admit, that I didn't find anything new or earth-shattering in any of the chapters. Yes there was some good advice in places, but all of that advice can certainly be found in any number of other places. And since I remember doing some of the things that were recommended, I guess I found that advice in other places. Or perhaps it was common sense. Read the bible to your kids; take them to church; at different ages, they have different needs and should be dealt with according to what level of maturity they have; all your kids are different and need to be treated as individuals. WOW! What a surprise.

My first concern about what I was reading came early on, in the forward written by Emerson Eggerichs. A pastor was so impressed with how well his parents had done parenting him that he invited them to teach a parenting class which he attended. I love my parents too. That doesn't make them experts.

I'm used to reading books that suggest that this is what worked for the author in his context, but it often comes with the caveat that this is what he did, and that it might not, probably won't, work for someone else. This book seemed to be more along the lines of the authors saying "this is what works..."

I received a copy of this book in exchange for the review

Caitlin says

The Comers live their talk. They are the real deal and their love for Jesus and their kids shines brightly in this book. I've sat under Phil, Diane, and even John Mark's teaching during my young adulthood and have seen how their love for the Lord has impacted generations. As a young mother, I was excited to pick up this book and glean bits of wisdom from them. I've just finished it but I know I'll be picking it up again and again, as it points me to Jesus and my family.

Grace White says

I've attended the conference and now read the book. I will be re-reading this book each year from now. Practical, Biblical advice that stands the test of time. Thank you to the Comers for sharing their hearts!

Brittany says

Read if: you want to raise passionate Jesus followers, you lead children, youth, or families in developing their faith, you want both theoretical and practical advice for raising children

My Thoughts: I do not yet have children, so my responses and thoughts to this book can only be hypothetical at this point, but serving as a children's pastor includes the responsibility of equipping and resourcing the parents in my ministry. So this was a great tool to read to see if it would be worth passing on to families, and it definitely is!

The Comers share their experiences (both the wins and the failures) as parents of 4 children, and their advice includes everything from the theoretical to the practical to the Scriptural. The book is divided into 4 stages of life: early childhood, late childhood, the teenage years, and young adulthood (yes, the Comers claim that wise parenting extends past high school graduation). They even discuss how to let go gracefully once children do become adults, and they compare each stage to the process of building a house. This analogy provides a concrete and simple explanation of the extensive and complicated process of raising children.

One concept that will stick with me is the concept of "The Box." The box helps discipline children, adjusting for each stage, with the foundation of Jesus, within the confines of order and discipline, and topped with affirmation, encouragement, and prayer. The Comer's description of the unique and yet complementary roles of both parents in the home also provided a new perspective on parenting.

Each section concludes with a concise overview or review of the main ideas for that stage, and the amount of Scripture used throughout the book to support their parenting ideas helped their practices make sense. I also appreciated that the book reminds readers that it does not provide a fool-proof formula that guarantees you'll raise children following hard after God. And the biggest factor in raising passionate Jesus followers? When the parents are passionate Jesus followers themselves!

Raising Passionate Jesus Followers is a book to read before becoming a parent and to keep on hand as you parent children from birth to adulthood. I know I'll definitely keep it handy and refer back to it at each stage of my future children's lives. Even without children yet, my husband and I were able to use some of the tools in the book to dream about our future family and spark some great conversations.

Christian parents do not automatically spawn Christian children, and it takes intentional parenting to teach kids to experience God and love people well. Raising Passionate Jesus Followers by Phil and Diane Comer provides the closest thing to an effective and comprehensive flow chart for raising children who not only profess a faith, but actually possess real faith.

Dan says

The issue of why so many children raised in Christian homes and in churches are apparently abandoning their faith, or at least their traditions, is a troubling one and there don't seem to be any clear answers. (Although, I suspect the "problem" may be overstated a bit, as many of these now-adult children appear to be not leaving the faith but the traditions and are pursuing their faith in non-conventional ways, such as home groups and "free-range" Christian lifestyles.

This book is a helpful contribution to that discussion. I most appreciated the practical and biblical instruction and the personal stories from the authors' personal experiences, as opposed to many of the theoretical discussion offered by so many others.

The Comers -- Phil, Diane and their son, John Mark -- provide a theological basis for intentional parenting and practical suggestions for developing a parenting plan.

Citing Luke 2:52 and 2 Timothy 4:2, for instance, they outline three areas of focus: character development, relationship building, and spiritual training. They offer insights into dealing with children on an individual basis and not using a one-size-fits-all approach. They explain the difference between punishment and discipline, which are often confused. They offer guidance to parents who have made mistakes in the past. Most importantly, they explain that if we parents want our children to be passionate Jesus followers, we must be also.

Instead of dictating a precise child-raising plan to follow, the Comers help readers develop their own parenting visions and plans.

The Comers are pastors of a church in Portland, Ore., that focuses on millennials and to whom this book is aimed. John Mark is the lead pastor and Phil and Diane devote their time to leading parenting conferences. Phil also formerly worked with Luis Palau ministries have been married for over 35 years.

No parenting book is the final word on the subject. But Raising Passionate Jesus Followers is a good addition to that library. I don't necessarily encourage young parents to consume themselves with reading books about Christian parenting, but if you're going to this isn't a bad one to include. The best child-raising advice comes from older parents, like the Comers, by the parents devoting themselves to one another (modeling the Trinity, I like to think), for the father in particular to devote himself to following Jesus and modeling the life he wants his children to follow, and by the family devoting themselves to God's Word. See Deuteronomy 6:4-9:

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.[a] 5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 8 Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. 9 Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates."

And finally to the family doing its part to fulfill the Great Commission. For the family and their household to be Kingdom outpost in its neighborhood and community. Not to growing an institution, but to helping change lives like Jesus did.

I received a complimentary copy of this book through Handlebar. My comments are an independent and honest review.

Joan says

This may well be the best book I have read on Christian parenting. It answers so many questions and is full of biblical and practical instruction.

We live our lives intentionally, planning and making lists. Yet we think we can raise godly children without doing so intentionally. Shepherding a child to a godly adulthood does not just automatically happen. The Comers provide the theological basis for intentional parenting as well as suggestions for developing a parenting plan that is effective and doable.

I am impressed with the biblical foundation they lay. For example, they reference Luke 2:52 and outline the three areas to intentionally focus on: character development, relationship building, and spiritual training. The tools they employ are also based on a biblical basis, such as 2 Timothy 4:2.

The Comers walk readers through the growth stages, giving practical suggestions along the way. They have insights into guiding the strong willed child. They advocate really knowing each child and how that shapes parenting techniques. They clarify the difference between punishment and discipline. They help readers to know what to do if they've parented in a wrong way so far. And perhaps my favorite emphasis is that parents must themselves be passionate followers of Jesus and model that behavior.

The Comers share how they formed their own vision of raising disciples for generations. That vision shaped their parenting goals and even determined which television programs they watched. Knowing that one plan does not work for all families, they help readers develop their own parenting visions and plans.

I highly recommend this book to parents and potential parents. You will find within its covers a wealth of information and practical help in raising godly adults.

I received a complimentary copy of this book through Handlebar. My comments are an independent and honest review.

Tori says

I am always interested in discovering new parenting books and getting new parenting advice. In a world that is ever changing, it's always good to get all the advice you can. Especially when it comes to Christian parenting.

This book has a lot of relatable stories throughout, and a lot of tips. There are even various sections with advice on ages which I appreciated because methods differ with each age group. I believe this can be a great instructional book for new Christian parents who may not have been raised in a Christian home as well.

Those that don't know where to start with their children's faith and Christianity.

This is basically a reference book, but I did enjoy it. It definitely will work best as a sort of handbook where you can go back and look at it whenever you need it. Definitely a good option to keep on your book shelf.

Disclaimer: I received a complimentary copy of this book from Handlebar in exchange for my unbiased review. All opinions expressed are solely my own.

Claire Johnson says

YOU GUYS. This is now one of my top 3 parenting books! I don't make Kevin read many of the parenting books I read - I usually give him the highlights. BUT I will ask him to read this one.

If you LOVE Parenting by Paul Tripp (and don't we all?!), you will also love this. I feel like it puts some more meat on the bones of what Tripp had to say. The Comers did such a great job fleshing out principles and giving PRACTICALS! Sorry for all the caps, I'm just excited.

I don't agree with every iota written in this book (I never do), but I base my ratings on things I'll glean versus things I'll leave...and the ratio on this book is way more gleaning than leaving. Also, not many contemporary Christian parenting books are written by grandparents - those who have already done the hard work, have fruit to show for it, but also realize the mistakes they made and how they would've done certain things differently. So I appreciated the perspective.

Full disclosure: the last few chapters are on raising teenagers and young adults, so I skipped those! So technically my review can't be fully counted :)

Julius McCarter says

Phil and Diane Comer's Raising Passionate Jesus Followers: The Power of Intentional Parenting brings together pastoral wisdom with nearly four decades of actual parenting to offer help for parents who desire nothing more than to raise passionate Jesus followers.

It's a manual of practical advice, with theological depth, that encourages parents to be intentional about the way in which they aide in the development of their children's character and spiritual formation. Starting at birth, into grade school, through the daunting teenage years, to launching them into college, and finally letting go, this book contains the whys and the hows that parents need. This book will serve as an invaluable resource for any parent whose greatest longing is to shepherd their children into a vibrant faith in God.

Each chapter is short enough for a quick, daily read, and still offers enough weighty meat that readers will be left to ponder for the rest of the day.

I received a free copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for my honest review here.

Steph Cherry says

What a great book on parenting! I underlined or took notes from almost every page. I found some nugget that

I could pray for in nearly every paragraph. This is one of the best practical books I've read on parenting by faith to infuse faith.

If you are like me and had little guidance in this area, this is a book for you. So often we feel like we don't have it together and the time we have to train our children is slipping through our hands. Phil and Diane give practical, thoughtful, timely guides for igniting a passion in our children for Christ. Of course, only Christ can give faith, but we as parents can make delighting in him so much easier. I don't know about you, but I need reminders to reach through the chaos and remind me to pray, teach, love.

This book is broken up into sections according to age and the basic areas of character you are working towards in each. I can see many areas where I could use some help and some where I am thriving. The main thing is that it gave me specifics to pray and practical steps to take. Even if you just prayed through the book, I feel like it would be a good investment. We may not be able to perfectly showcase Christ to our kids, but with guidance and prayer, we can try.
