



Monday, February 11, 2008



Wheaton Bible Church

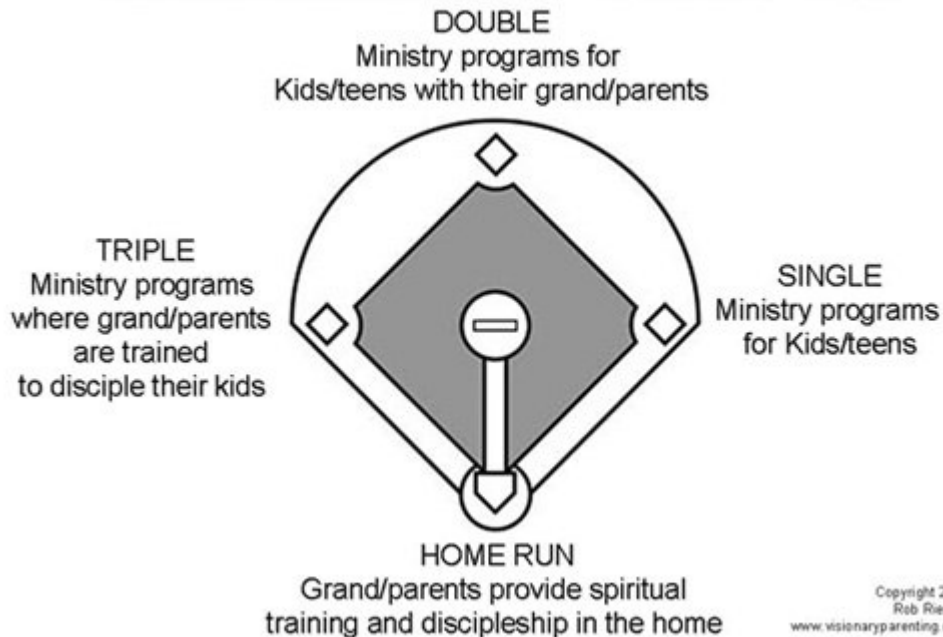
[Wheaton Bible Church](#) (Senior Pastor, Rob Bugh – www.wheatonbible.org) is on a mission to restore parents and grandparents to their biblical role as primary spiritual trainers of their children and grandchildren. We are in year number four of this overwhelmingly complex challenge to change the culture of church away from the delegation model of spiritual training. In the delegation model, Christian parents feel that the most important thing they can do to help their kids and teens grow spiritually is to get them involved in church programs. Our vision is to restore and reclaim a biblical culture of family discipleship, where parents and grandparents take the lead in the spiritual training of their children and teens at home, and the church is able to give our best efforts to helping them be successful. Ben Freudenburg (author of the exceptional book, [Family Friendly Churches](#)) calls this the “home-centered, church-supported” model for the evangelism and discipleship of the next generation.

Rob Rienow – Family Pastor

Here are four key areas that we are working in as church in order to equip and inspire parents and grandparents to take the lead in the spiritual development of their children:

- 1. Our mission statement explicitly calls families to worship together at church and at home.** For many years, teenagers in our church would attend youth group on Sunday morning while their parents would attend “church.” We have become convicted that families worshipping together on Sunday morning is the most important, most biblical, and most powerful spiritual experience for everyone in the family. Calling our people to worship at home is a new thing for us. According to Deuteronomy 6:7, family worship, sitting at home and talking about the things of God, is the starting application point of the Great Commandment. Currently, less than 25% of WBC families practice united prayer, Scripture reading, and spiritual discussion in their homes. We have a long way to go.
- 2. We are developing a new curriculum model which brings together church and home into a powerful spiritual partnership.** In the fall of 2008 all the kids in the church, k-12, will be learning the same thing at the same time. In other words, all the kids might be doing a series on the attributes of God. Each grade level may be talking about different attributes, but all levels will be learning about the same general subject. In advance of each 8 week curriculum module, a family discipleship guide will go home to every parent and grandparent in the church. The family discipleship guide will provide creative ideas for family worship in the home, along with Scriptures to discuss throughout the week. The essential key is that the family discipleship guide is designed to be done before church each week, not as a follow up. It is our vision that parents and grandparents will never again have to ask, “So what did you learn at church today?” – because they will have already had the opportunity to learn together with their children at home earlier that week.
- 3. Our youth and children’s staff embrace the goal of “hitting for the cycle.”** In baseball, if you hit a single, double, triple, and homerun, all in the same game, it is called “hitting for the cycle.” That is what we want to do in our youth and children’s ministries. What does it mean to hit singles, doubles, triples, and homeruns with kids and teens? Here is our ministry model:

Youth and Children's Ministry Programming Model



We believe that when we bring kids and teens to church for ministry programs that those are valuable, but in comparison to the other things we can do, those ministry events (Sunday school, youth group, kids clubs) are hitting spiritual “singles” with kids and teens.

We can hit spiritual doubles when we create spiritual growth events for kids/teens and their parents/grandparents. A retreat weekend with junior high boys may have spiritual impact, but a retreat weekend with those boys and their dads will go deeper.

We believe that we hit spiritual triples in the lives of kids and teens when we offer ministry programs where parents/grandparents are trained to disciple their kids. If we have 100 high school students together to talk with them about dating and sexuality, that is one hour of ministry. If we have 100 parents of high school students together to train them how to talk with their teen about dating and sexuality, that one hour just multiplied itself into tens if not hundreds of hours of ministry conversations at home, in the car, etc. We use the [Visionary Parenting workshop](#) to inspire and equip parents and grandparents to lead spiritual discipleship in the home.

4. Lastly, we believe that the most powerful spiritual event in the life of a child or teenager is when their parent or grandparent leads regular family worship in the home. It is our vision to do everything in our power to call, inspire, and equip families gather together often in their homes to pray, sing, read the Scriptures, and participate in learning activities that communicate God's unchanging truth. Want more information about Wheaton Bible Church's Family Ministry strategy? Contact:



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