



## ***An Invitation to RHYTHM***

**In talking with parents, the general theme of families with 3rd graders is that life just gets crazy this year. Children are beginning to discover talents and participate in more extracurricular activities than ever before leading to a rushed and, sometimes, chaotic life. We want to help families discover a rhythm that's doable so that activities aren't controlling their time, but that families are controlling their activities.**

### **Kickstarter 1: RHYTHM with PRIORITIES**

Anything that is important to us would be considered a priority. Your 3rd grader has innumerable opportunities in which they can engage. As parents, we can help them understand that developing a rhythm means saying yes to some things and no to some things.

On the provided sheet, help your child list his/her priorities. Again, this is a list of things that are very important to him/her and on which he/she spends significant amounts of time.

In the Bible, Nehemiah returns to his hometown of Jerusalem to rebuild the broken down walls. This becomes Nehemiah's top priority and one he is very passionate about working on until it is completed. Read Nehemiah 6:1-4

to see how Nehemiah dealt with the distraction of people:

*Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem, the Arab, heard about what I had done. So did the rest of our enemies. All of them heard I had rebuilt the wall. In fact, they heard there weren't any gaps left in it. But up to that time I hadn't put up the gates at the main entrances to the city.*

*Sanballat and Geshem sent me a message. They said, "Come. Let's talk with one another. Let's meet in one of the villages on the flatlands of Ono."*

*But they were planning to harm me. So I sent messengers to them with my answer. I replied, "I'm working on a huge project. So I can't get away. Why should the work stop while I leave it? Why should I go down and talk with you?"*

*They sent me the same message four times. And I gave them the same answer each time.*

Nehemiah said NO to other things in order to finish his priorities and do what he thought was right.

Look together through your child's list of priorities. Are there things that he/she needs to begin saying no to in order to focus more on other priorities. Have an honest conversation about what is most important, all the things that are pulling for time, and what seems most important. Figuring out what to say no to is something that our



children will have to do ALL of their lives. Maybe there isn't a need to say NO yet, but have an honest discussion with your child helping them understand that time will come.

## **Kickstarter 2: RHYTHM with GOD TIME**

Often we allow all the other things in our life to interfere with God time. This Kickstarter is designed to help your child figure out a rhythm for God time; when, where and how they'll spend time with God. This is something adults struggle with as well. It's OK to be honest with your child about your current rhythm with God time and if that is/isn't a struggle for you.

Why do we need to have consistent God time? Jesus, Himself, made sure to carve out time to talk with God. Read Mark 1:3-5

*It was very early in the morning and still dark. Jesus got up and left the house. He went to a place where he could be alone. There he prayed.*

Take some time to think through your family's weekly schedule. Help your child figure out the best time of day when they can carve out some time to pray and read their Bible. Is it in the morning before school, as soon as they get home from school, after dinner, before bed? Land on a specific time during the day that he/she can have God time.

Make sure they have a plan of what to read (1 chapter/story a day starting in John, a devotional guide), a Bible, and know to spend time in prayer (love God, thank God, ask God). See the resource "Helping Your Child Develop a God Time" for more guidance.

This will begin a habit that will lead them to pursue a real relationship with God. Make sure to consistently check in with your child to see how their God time is going. If they forget to do it, evaluate priorities and figure out what is taking precedent over God time. This will be an ongoing conversation with your child, but one that is worth the intentionality.

## **Kickstarter 3-RHYTHM with REST**

With the craziness of life, the one thing that often gets pushed away is time to REST. We were made for much more than constant entertainment. We were created for peace which can be nearly impossible with the demands of life. Look at how God took a rest in Genesis 2:1-3

*So the heavens and the earth and everything in them were completed. By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing. So on the seventh day he rested from all of his work. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy. He rested on it. After he had created everything, he rested from all of the work he*



*had done.*

God gave His absolute best then rested when done. Ask your child, when do you rest? Make sure to include times when they're actually sleeping as well, since we know many kids don't get enough sleep (need 10-11 hours per night). When do they have down time, time to reflect and think about the day, the week?

Look at the created weekly calendar. Take the time to fill this out together. Most weeks will be similar for children. They have school on certain days, they have after school activities on specific days, write in where God time fits within each day, include chores/responsibilities. Then write down when in the week your child will have rest. When will they be UNPLUGGED in order to think through their week to evaluate like God did, WAS IT GOOD?

This small calendar will help kids with a visual for expectations with his/her time. You can hang it in his/her bedroom, tape it inside their closet door, etc. as a frame of reference on a week to week basis.