

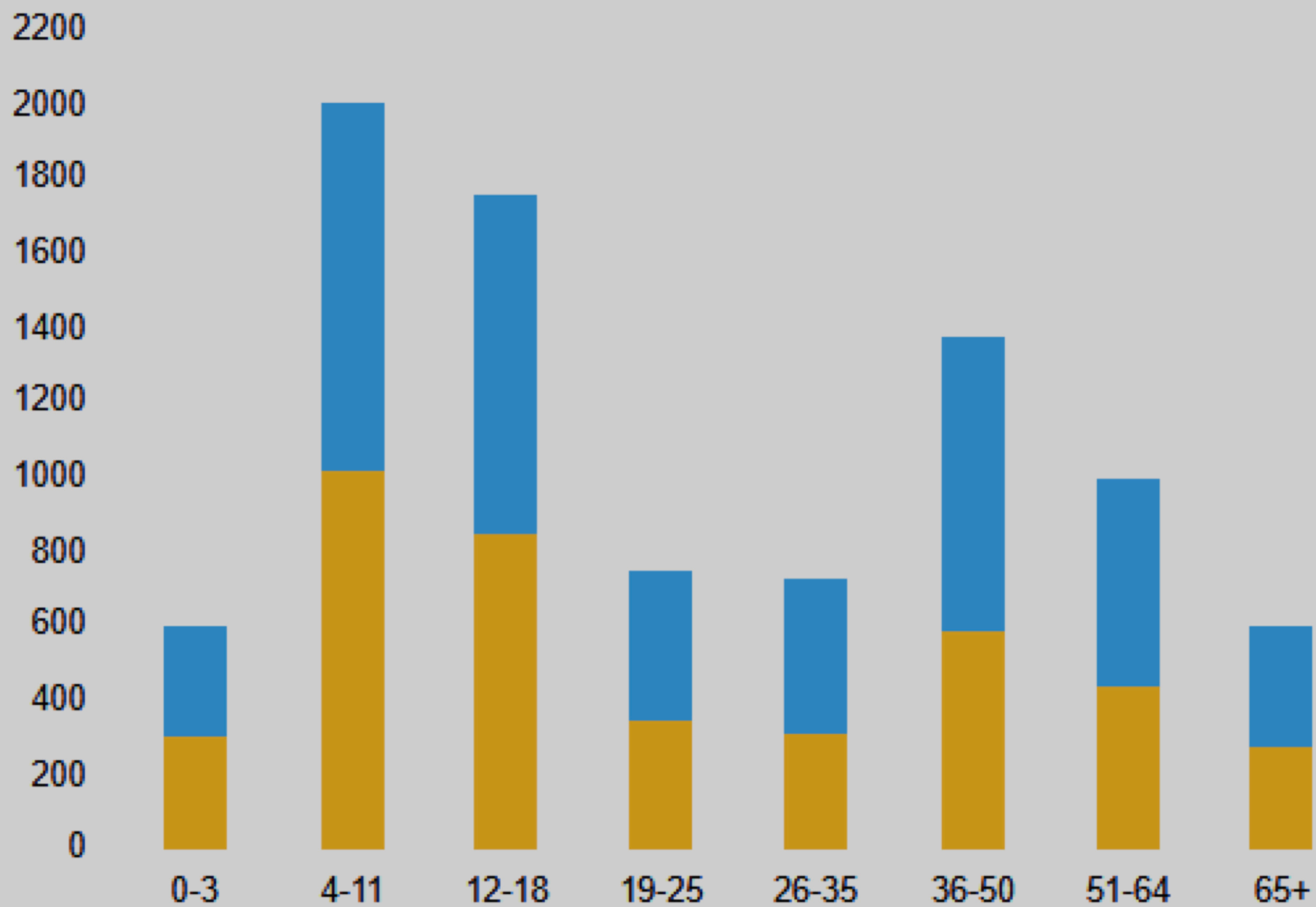
So God created human beings in His own image. In the image of God He created them; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”

Genesis 1:27-28

When God created humankind, He made them in the likeness of God. Male and female He created them, and He blessed them and named them “Humankind” when they were created. When Adam had lived one hundred thirty years, He became the father of a son in His likeness, according to His image, and named Him Seth.

Genesis 5:1-3

Demographics



Review the best research on Christian parents passing down faith.

The Good News!

Parents are by far the biggest influence on the spiritual lives and destiny of their kids.

The Bad News!

Most Christian parents aren't passing down a faith that's all that Christian to their kids.

The purpose of life?

To find happiness (enjoy success and positive psychological feelings) and to be a good person (do what is moral) on your own terms (the self-determination of a child should not be violated).

The value of religion?

Religion helps provide feelings happiness (peace, comfort, protection, belonging) and produces pragmatic social results (fosters good citizenship, strengthens morals, builds families).

**Why parents should pass
down religion?**

Religion can help growing children
navigate life and live good lives.

What role should religious congregations play in your parenting?

“Religious congregations should reinforce what parents teach at home, not determine it ... Most helpful is when congregations provide a general sense of an inviting, comfortable community and some positive experiences for children. Kid-appealing programs and some teaching on the moral basics are also great. Congregations that do things to make time spent there fun for children make getting kids to participate less of a headache, and so are particularly attractive and appreciated. But specifically “religious” aspects of congregations—like theology, liturgy, and doctrine—are not especially important when it comes to parenting.”

“We were continually struck during our interviews by what seemed to be a gap between what religious identity, practices, and beliefs meant to parents and what it means to the “professional” religious leaders of parents’ religious institutions. The particular doctrines, standards, and priorities of their own religious traditions seem to be not terribly important to most American religious parents. Instead, for most, religion is primarily a good resource for getting along well in this life, for coping, succeeding, and maintaining good relationships.”

– **Smith, Riz, Rotolo, *Religious Parenting***

Review the best research on Christian parents passing down faith.

Test how engaged NE parents measure up against the national dataset

Methodology

A qualitative study on a representative sample of engaged NECC parents through focus groups.

1. Reflect on your priorities as a parent. What are the highest hopes you have for your children?

-Passing down the faith

“The highest priority is, honestly, to have our kids know God in the deepest and most meaningful way possible.” - A Dad

**1. Reflect on your priorities as a parent.
What are the highest hopes you have for
your children?**

-Passing down the faith

-Preparation for adulthood

-Helping them find God's calling on their life

-Building a deep and lasting relationship

2. What do you think are the main benefits of passing down your faith?

- Eternal Salvation
- Moral Formation
- Perseverance
- Community

“We are going to face hardships no matter what. Everybody is going to face hard times, but either going through it with God or without God makes a big difference. We don’t want our kids to have to face this world and the ugliness of it without God.” - A Mom

3. What challenges/fears stand in your way to successfully passing down your faith to your children?

-Pushing Them Away

-Knowledge Inadequacy

-The Influence of Outside Voices

-Technology

-Deconstruction

4. How does your unique parenting style help/hinder you passing down your faith?

-Aware of Own Parents' Impact

-Uncertain of What Style is Best

A. Do I want them to love me like a friend or respect me like an authority?

B. Should I be real and vulnerable or an above reproach example?

C. Should I lean toward mercy or accountability?

D. Should I let them make their own decisions or should I set boundaries and give strong direction?

5. What sort of things are you currently doing to pass down your faith to your children?

- Prayer (8)**
- Bible devotions (6)**
- Serving with children (5)**
- Regular church attendance (4)**
- Christian music (4)**
- Christian podcasts (3)**
- Including children in adult group (3)**
- Serving in your child's ministry area (2)**
- Intensive discipleship programs (2)**
- Christian film (2)**
- Missional relationships with the lost (2)**

6. What sort of training, resources, or help do you need to pass down your faith effectively?

-Theological Training

-Practical Training

-Peer Mentorship

7. What role do you think NE should play in helping you pass down your faith to your kids?

- "co-leadership"

- "partnership"

- "like-minded mentors"

- "the first supplement"

- "We are the president, and you are the vice president."

- "The church gives accountability and coaching from another respected voice."

- Review the best research on Christian parents passing down faith.
- Test how engaged NE parents measure up against the national dataset
- Analyze the data and suggest implications.

Areas of Concern

- Parents Are Confused and Conflicted on Parenting Style
- Fathers May Need More Encouragement and Equipping than Mothers
- Important spiritual rhythms were totally missing: sabbath rest, fasting, contemplation, hospitality

Families who engage in an intentional church fare way better.

“Listen, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

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