

# THE NEST

A CCS Resource for Discipleship in the Home

## Thermostat & Thermometers

HABITUDES: IMAGES THAT FORM LEADERSHIP HABITS AND ATTITUDES

Alright - story time. Last night, one of my kids left our backdoor open after letting the dog in. Mistakenly, it was open **all night**. When I awoke in the morning, our upstairs was so warm! That's because the thermometer is just a few short feet away from the back deck door! That poor furnace was literally heating up the alleys of Moose Jaw.

This is a great example of an illustration that I use with our students all the time. We can either be thermometers or we can be thermostats. Futile as its attempt was . . . the thermostat **couldn't resist** calling for the furnace when it dropped below its setting. It had to act on the temperature. It worked all night in attempt to influence the air on our main floor.

The thermometer, on the other hand, reflects the temperature. As we get ready for Christmas, I'm sure we're all going to find those instruments to help ensure our turkeys are at the right temperature. But let me ask, does the thermometer influence the meat? Of course not, it's just reflects the temp. Whereas the thermostat influences.

So the question is this: **are you a thermometer that reflects the culture? Or are you a thermostat that influences the culture?**



## Key Thoughts:

What's the difference between a thermometer and a thermostat? **A thermometer simply reflects the temperature while a thermostat influences it.**

How are you influencing the culture and conditions of your home to reinforce values and vision of discipleship?

**It's always easier to make small adjustments, proactively, rather than large changes reactively.**

Consider your **BIG ROCKS** (priorities). How can you plan intentionally to influence the pace and culture of your home as you get ready for Christmas?

**How can you begin not to plan and a prioritize the influences of your home in 2024?**

As parents, our role is to be the thermostats of our home. We are to work, perhaps even with a level of futility like my furnace, at influencing the culture and environment of our family. It is on us to regulate the conditions and the influences that are shaping our students.

Now let's just think about my main floor one more time. How hard did my furnace work when the door was open and attempting to fight the minus temperatures? **It was non-stop.** Compare that to raising it just 2-3 degrees after coming home from work - significantly easier and manageable.

The idea here is that it's always going to be more manageable to parent in smaller degrees than attempting to tackle a cold front. This means a posture of awareness and adjustment as we continue to monitor and respond to the culture of our home and the vision for our family.



Here are a couple of places we might consider being thermostats:

#### Engaging in discipleship activities in the home.

- I get it, we're tired. It's been a long day and there's still house work. Research indicates that bed-time routines are consistently a place where faith formation is impactful. Taking time to reflect on the day together with our kids, pray together, and read scripture is a way we can influence routines and rhythms for our family.

#### Media and Social Influence:

- As parents, we set the example and influence the conditions around media and social influence. The scriptures help us here: "do not be misled, bad company corrupts good character" (1 Cor 15:33). We should not just monitor but influence the relationships and messaging that is shaping the lives of our students.

#### Church, Camp, and Community

- We can influence the conditions our students experience by prioritizing and planning for key activities that will reinforce vision and values of our home.



The image that goes hand-in-hand with the thermostat vs. thermometer illustration is the **Big Rocks First** illustration. This is simply the idea that if we are not intentional about planning for those critical behaviours and experiences in our life then we will find that space in our calendar will often run out. On the other hand, if we sit together as a family and plan our month or semester out, ensuring that key things like youth group, church, and summer camp are scheduled, it's amazing that there is still time for Disney+ and friend connections.

As we brace for the Christmas season, it will be easy to find ourselves simply reflecting the culture and pace of life around us. Take time to consider how you might want to intentionally influence, to be a thermostat as it were, in your home and family in the season ahead. Prioritize those things that will draw you together as a family and also to draw you together, close to God through our Lord Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

## Resource for the shelf:

