Dear Parents,

 I’m not sure if you’ve ever had this thought, but I’ve often been jealous of a napping child. When I see a small child who doesn’t want to nap, I often think, “One of these days you’ll be wishing you could take a nap.” Sleep is very important for us as adults, but it is equally as important to children. The difference is they’re growing bodies need MORE of it than we do as adults. “Poor sleep patterns are linked to stress, depression, memory loss, weight gain, lower attention and increased accidents” according to kidshealth.org. Maybe you used to rock your little one to sleep, singing a little song as they drifted into sweet rest. With most grade-school children, it’s now up to them to get themselves to sleep, and often that is be met with resistance. One more trip to the bathroom, one more glass of water, one more story, one more hug and kiss, etc… In the video below, we’ll walk through this issue of bedtime battles with you.

<https://vimeo.com/parentministry/review/120256969/476f2de2e5>

 Sleep is evidence of our humanity. We know God does not sleep. Psalm 121 tells us that. However, when Jesus lived as a man on earth we know he spent time sleeping. He even slept on boats during storms when everyone else was scared. As humans we need sleep. Our little ones need sleep and they need more of it than we do. However, you may find yourself fighting the battle of getting your child to bed pretty consistently. We want to help you create a home where rest and sleep is held in high regard. So how do you start developing a culture within your home that values sleep?

1) Establish a bedtime routine. One example is use the bathroom, put on pajamas, brush teeth, read the Bible with mom/dad, read quietly for 10 minutes then lights off. This routine stays consistent.

2) Keep distractions out of the bedroom. No TVs, handheld devices on or in the bed. If toys left on the floor are a distraction, make cleaning them up part of the bedtime routine.

3) Declare the bed a place for just sleeping. No homework, playtime, etc done while lying on the bed. The bed is only used for sleeping. (P.S mom and dad – this goes for you too! No working from bed!)

4) Limit food and drinks containing caffeine and sugar before bed.

5) Keep a consistent bedtime. It’s OK for this to fluctuate by 10-15 minutes, but if the bed time is 8:00, define that well. Does that mean 8:00 lights out, or 8:00 in bed? There’s a big difference between the two.

 We know we are at our personal best when we’ve had enough sleep, and so are our children. Let’s fight hard to make sleep a priority for our families by starting a new rhythm at bedtime, one that takes the battle out of bedtime!

Building Young Disciples,

Pastor Sarah