



## **First Steps Forward**

By Jarrett Kerbel (10/17/25)

God brings special people into our lives who bless us with new vision, new skills, and new resources to practice intimacy with God. Seth Little is one such person for me. Seth was my music director at All Angels' Church in New York City. A sweet man of prayer, sincerity and kindness, he taught me many things, two of which I will share in this column.

First, Seth and his wife are raising three marvelous children in New York. Each morning at Breakfast they share morning prayer together or a portion from whichever Gospel they are reading through at the time. Prayer is mixed with wide open discussion of scripture. The Little children had amazing biblical fluency and theological reflection skills. The Christian Formation of children and families starts at home. This is what I learned from Seth.

Children are at church for perhaps one or two hours per week. The rest is school and family time. Families - including grandparents, godparents, aunts and uncles etc. - are in the best position to form the next generation in faith. An adult who shares their prayer life, their spiritual practices and reflection, and their Biblical fluency make a huge impression on children and give them gifts that will serve them a lifetime.

Second, at one breakfast table morning prayer, Seth's daughter Lydia made a bold suggestion. She said, "We should pray that we are ready when God sends us a person who needs compassion or to hear about God today." And so, the family began to pray every day that they would be a ready resource for anyone who needed spiritual support that day.

I have adopted this practice and I hope the church will as well. My prayer is for God to prepare me to be a Godly resource for anyone I meet who is searching for support and connection to God. We can pray to God that our church is ready to greet each seeker who enters our doors and that we are ready to direct folks to our community who are hungry for God's presence in their life.

To conclude, another potent teaching I learned in New York is this: “Earn the right to share the Gospel with the people you befriend.” In other words, invest in relationships as a faithful, reliable, and consistently caring companion and once you have earned trust you will intuit when is the right time to share your faith. Yelling about faith from soap boxes and street corners does not work. Relational cultivation in the context of authentic loving care does.