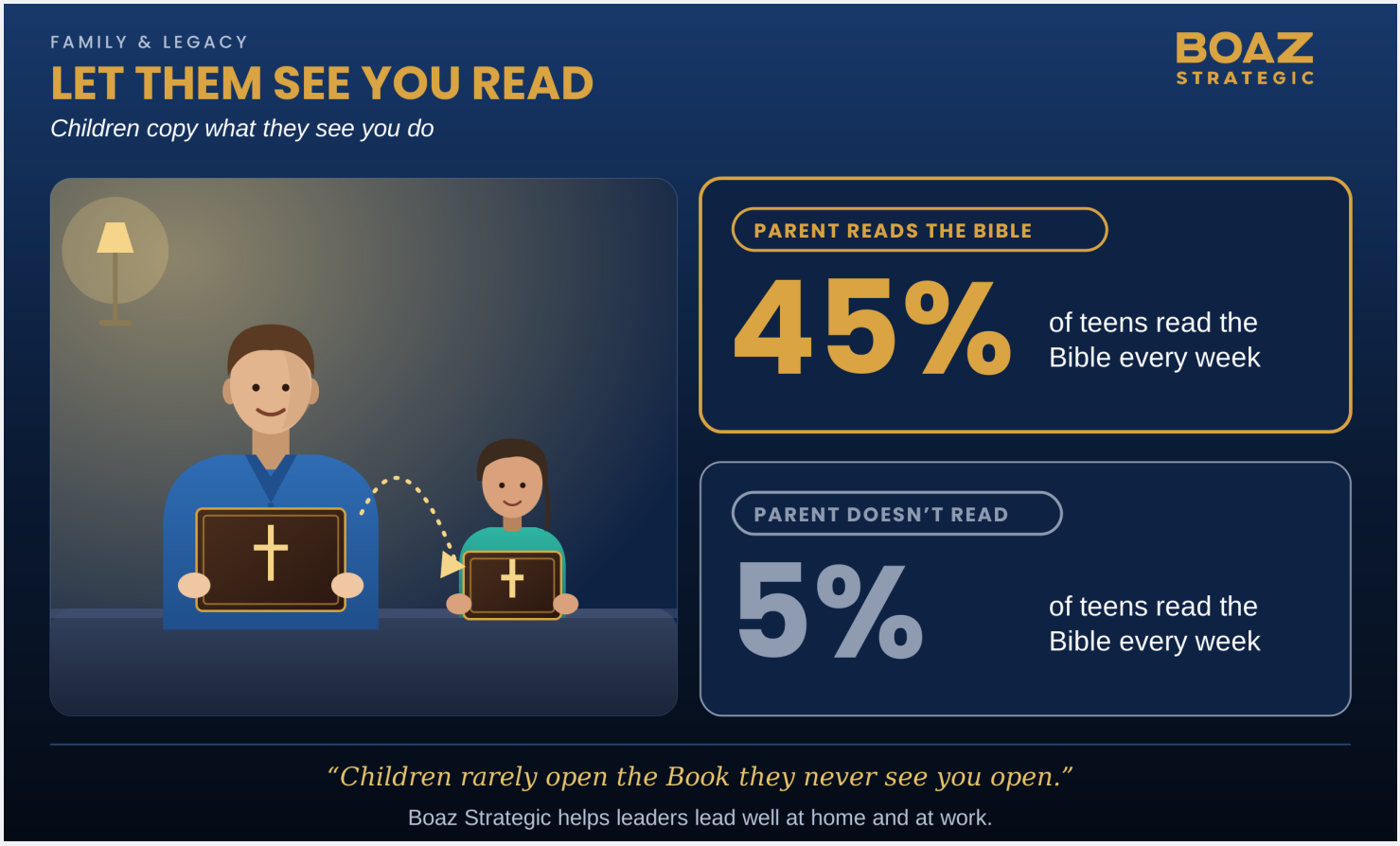


Let them see *you read.*

> *Faith is caught long before it is taught.*

Ask parents what they most want for their children's faith and you will hear the same answer: that it would become their own. Yet we overlook the most persuasive teacher in the house. Children watch what we do long before they weigh what we say.

The data is striking. In the 2016 Teen State of the Bible research, conducted by Barna for the American Bible Society, among teens whose parents read the Bible regularly or sometimes, 45 percent read it themselves at least weekly. Among teens whose parents do not read it regularly, just 5 percent do.

Turn it around and it holds: 90 percent of weekly teen readers said their parents read Scripture regularly or sometimes.

Your example is the first lesson.

This is correlation, not a guarantee. Faithful parents sometimes raise children who wander. Still, LifeWay Research found that the strongest predictor of a young adult's spiritual health was reading the Bible regularly as a child, which makes the example at home all the more important.

Scripture puts it in this order. "These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children" (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). First the heart of the parent, then the child. We cannot hand down what we have never picked up.

Try the Open Book Exercise.

This week, choose a time your children can see you reading Scripture: at the kitchen table, on the couch, before they leave for school. Do not announce it or turn it into a lesson. Afterward, share one line you read and why it mattered to you. Let them watch you be steadied.

And if you mark up your Bible, you are leaving them more than an example. You are leaving them a witness. See our Leader Insight, "Your Bible Is Your Legacy."

At Boaz Strategic, we help leaders pass on what matters most at home.

American Bible Society & Barna, Teen State of the Bible, 2016; LifeWay Research; Deut. 6:6-7 (NIV)

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