

JOYFUL EVERMORE

FREE CHAPTER PREVIEW

The Original Influencer

Chapter One: You Were Always the One

by Angela Hayes

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CHAPTER ONE

You Were Always the One

There's a moment most parents remember.

It might have been the first time your child reached for your hand in a crowd. Or the night they crawled into your bed after a bad dream — not because you told them to, but because you were the safest place they knew. It might have been a quiet Tuesday when they looked up at you with those eyes and said something that made you realize: they are watching everything.

They always have been.

Long before the first smartphone. Long before the algorithm decided what your child should see next. Long before the influencers, the YouTubers, the trending sounds and viral moments — there was you.

You were their first teacher. Their first mirror. Their first example of what love looks like, what safety feels like, what the world is made of.

The Noise Is Loud. But You Are Louder.

We live in a world that is competing for our children's attention at every turn. The average child spends hours each day consuming content created by strangers — people who have never held them when they cried, never stayed up through the fever, never whispered a prayer over their sleeping body.

And yet we wonder why they seem more influenced by a screen than by us.

Here is what I want you to hear, right from the beginning of this book:

*That is not because you matter less.
It is because no one has told you how much you matter more.*

The noise is loud. But you — your voice, your presence, your love — are louder.

You just have to know how to use what you already have.

This Isn't About Being Perfect

Before we go any further, I need to say something important.

This book is not about becoming a perfect parent.

Perfect parents don't exist. I've never met one, and I've never been one. What I have met — and what I believe you are — is a parent who cares deeply. A parent who picked up this book because something in them said: I want to do this well. I want my child to know they are loved.

I want to matter in their life.

That desire? That is everything.

Intentional parenting doesn't start with having all the answers. It starts with showing up. It starts with being willing to look inward, to grow, and to believe that the work you do in your own heart will always find its way into theirs.

Faith teaches us this. Over and over again.

*"Train up a child in the way he should go;
even when he is old he will not depart from it."*

— Proverbs 22:6

Notice what that verse doesn't say. It doesn't say train up a perfect child. It doesn't say never make mistakes. It says train up. It's a process. A direction. A daily, faithful leaning toward something good.

That is what this book is about.

A Prayer Before We Begin

Lord, meet every parent who holds these pages. Remind them of the irreplaceable role You placed them in. Give them courage to show up, grace when they fall short, and eyes to see the profound impact of their everyday love. Amen.

You are not just a parent.

You are the original influencer.

And it's time to step into that fully.

Ready for the Full Journey?

This was just the beginning.
The full book walks you through every step of becoming
the intentional, faith-centered parent your child needs.

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Also grab your FREE guide:

5 Ways to Be Your Child's Safe Place

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