

Missio Dei Fellowship exists to glorify God by delighting in Him and making Him known through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Drama of Parenting— Parenting 251

Ephesians 6:1-4

PowerPoint Presentation: None

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I. Introduction.

- A. We continue with this series based off of Ephesians 6:1-4 on the duties of parents and children.
 - 1. The focus is not upon the child though; rather upon the parents as they bring up their children before the Lord.
 - 2. We are seeking to understand what it takes to create a home and environment in which we can effectively raise children in the instruction and discipline of the Lord. One in which God is made much of and where the gospel can be heard and believed.
- B. Last week we looked at some principles that are logically and necessarily derived from Ephesians 6, as well as other passages.
 - 1. I gave a lot of illustrations and examples on how these principles look, especially as Kim and I raised our children.
 - 2. Some may hear these sermons wrongly and think I am saying, “Do it exactly like I did.” What I want you to take from the sermons in the principles and commands from the Scripture and apply them in your homes.
 - a. I do not care too much if you don’t like the application that I came up with. That is all they are, applications to the ideas. At the same time I think my suggestions are worthy starting points for you if you are finding you must rethink how you are parenting.
 - b. If you choose to reject them then what is more important is that you faithfully apply the principles and commands in your own way. But make sure it is faithful to the principles.
- C. Last week:
 - 1. Break from being child-centered.
 - 2. The proactive and biblical parent.

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3. Understands the presence and effects of sin.
 4. Understands the heart of the child.
 5. Understands that there is only a certain amount of time available.
 6. Use your authority.
- D. Illustration of bad parenting and its effects through C. R.'s book as a segue into the next series of points.

II. Parenting 251.

- A. Be humble.
1. Understand that you are handling the property of God (your children) and that He is the one who has given you the mandate to train and shepherd them.
 2. Carry a spirit of humility into that relationship.
 3. Philippians 2:3 should be a pattern of your life.
 4. **At the same time, do not mistake the exertion of authority with pride.** Humility is an attitude that seeks the well-being of others, but also is an attitude that recognizes that an account will be asked for by the Lord.
 - a. At times you may inappropriately discipline your child. The most common situations are when you are improperly angry, or you are seeking vengeance rather than discipline.
 - b. This is where you need to humble yourself and go confess that sin to your child.
 - (1) I would encourage you to also then pray with the child and confess your sin to the Lord in the presence of the child.
 - (2) That way he sees the spiritual dimension as well.
 - c. At the same time, if the discipline, though done wrongly, was for proper reasons, you will need to make that clear to the child so that they do not get the wrong impression that they were right in their behavior.
- B. The “do nots” of biblical parenting.
1. Do not provoke your child to anger (Ephesians 6:4).

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

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- a. The word we translate “provoke to anger” means to goad or push your child into a state of resentment and jealousy.
 - (1) It is important to understand that the Bible is not saying that you are wrong by establishing a proper and fair standard in your home, if your child responds to it in an angry fashion.
 - (2) It is also not justifying the anger of the child, merely stating that the child’s anger is a direct result of unbiblical parenting.
- b. The father who pushes his child to anger is a father who is not concerned about developing the heart of his child.
- c. Another aspect to this is that when the Bible speaks of God being provoked to anger it is due to ungodly behavior from others. If that is part of the intent, then Paul is warning against being an unrighteous father who is constantly offending the senses of the child.
- d. Anger puts up walls that hinder the training of the child.
- e. What are some ways we can do this?
 - (1) Impatient.
 - (a) Not listening—Proverbs 18:13, “He who gives an answer before he hears, It is folly and shame to him.”
 - (b) Not showing tolerance—Ephesians 4:1-2, “Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness [power under control], with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love.”
 - (2) Legalistic.
 - (a) One form of this is seen is that the child’s relationship with you is purely based upon his keeping of rules (works righteousness).
 - (b) This is also accomplished by placing personal standards and rules at the same level as biblical commands and standards.

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- i) You need to allow for mistakes.
- ii) You also should not see every mistake as sin.
- (c) The worst way is to burden the child with an endless list of rules and regulations (cf. Matthew 23:4).

They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger.

(3) Hypocritical.

- (a) Going back on your word or being crafty in how you “promise.”
 - i) Matthew 5:37 tells us to simply say what we mean and follow through with it.

But let your statement be, 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no'; anything beyond these is of evil.

- ii) Proverbs 6:12-13 condemns as wicked the one who says one thing but actually means another.

A worthless person, a wicked man, Is the one who walks with a perverse mouth, Who winks with his eyes, who signals with his feet, Who points with his fingers.

- iii) Colossians 3:9 tells us not to lie to one another.

Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices.

- (b) Having one standard for your children and another for yourself.
 - i) Matthew 7:1-5 tells us that before we point out another's fault we need to first look to ourselves, dealing with our problem first.

Do not judge so that you will not be judged. "For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. "Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye? "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

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- ii) You require your child to go patch up a relationship with another person, but refuse to do so yourself.
- iii) Types of movies watched, language used, food eaten, etc.
- iv) Do as I say and not as I do is not funny, it is of the devil.

(4) Pride.

- (a) This is such a broad category that almost everything falls into it.
- (b) One area that can be very serious is refusing to confess sin that you have done against your child.
 - i) Proverbs 28:13

He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.

- ii) James 4:6

But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE."

- iii) James 5:16

Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

(5) Anger.

- (a) Proverbs 29:22 teaches that expressing anger will result in strife.

An angry man stirs up strife, And a hot-tempered man abounds in transgression.

- (b) Proverbs 30:33

For the churning of milk produces butter, And pressing the nose brings forth blood; So the churning of anger produces strife.

(6) Sarcastic.

- (a) This is too common within homes. There is a fine line between teasing and cutting sarcasm.

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- i) Ephesians 4:29 says, “Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.”
 - a) Note the broadness of the command (and yes, it is a command, not a suggestion).
 - b) The idea is that you speak so as to build up, not tear down.
 - c) By implication then, the unwholesome word does not give grace to those who hear.
- (b) Proverbs 15:1, “A gentle answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.”
- (c) Proverbs 25:23 promises that a “backbiting tongue” will bring out anger in the other person.

The north wind brings forth rain, And a backbiting tongue, an angry countenance.

- (d) Colossians 3:8

But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.

- (7) Favoritism.
 - (a) The story of Joseph is a fitting illustration of this. The Bible tells us that Jacob loved Joseph more than the other children and the result was hatred in the brothers toward Joseph (cf. Genesis 37:1-4).
 - (b) Proverbs 24:23

These also are sayings of the wise. To show partiality in judgment is not good.

- f. What can happen if we choose to ignore this command?
 - (1) Rebellion (Proverbs 19:19).

A man of great anger will bear the penalty, For if you rescue him, you will only have to do it again.

- (2) Hatred (Genesis 37:3-4).

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Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a varicolored tunic. His brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers; and so they hated him and could not speak to him on friendly terms.

(3) Lack of self-control in our children (Proverbs 25:28).

Like a city that is broken into and without walls Is a man who has no control over his spirit.

(4) Rash and foolish decisions that can result in long term consequences.

(a) Esther 1 tells of the king of Persia ordering his wife to dance before his assembled guests. Most likely she was to dance in a suggestive or filthy manner and she refused. The Bible tells us that as a result the king's anger burned and he had his wife put away from him forever.

(b) Matthew 2 tells of how Herod had wanted the Magi to come back and tell him where Jesus was at. When they did not return he flew into a rage and had all the male children under two in Bethlehem killed.

(c) As a police officer, I arrested many people who had committed very serious offences simply out of anger.

2. Do not exasperate your child (Colossians 3:12).

So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

a. This word means to rouse to jealousy and bitterness.

b. The same things that apply to provoking your child to anger apply here.

3. Do not withhold physical discipline (Proverbs 13:24).

He who withholds his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him diligently.

III. The “do’s” of biblical parenting.

A. Do focus your attention upon your children, not other's.

1. It is easy to become a self-proclaimed expert in child rearing but we must all remember that opinions are cheap.

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2. Many people find it easier to focus on the problems of other children; rather than examining their own. In the same way, many parents will determine that other parents are not doing things the best way, while their own parenting actions are weak at best.
3. Matthew 7:1-4 tells us that we need to be looking at ourselves first.

“Do not judge so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye?”

4. We must all earn the right to be heard and respected.
5. This is why Titus 2 tells us that the older women are to be teaching the younger women how to love their children, husbands, and keep their homes.
 - a. Of course this presupposes that the old women have made it their goal and purpose to become experts in these areas. There are many older women who really have little authority to speak.
 - b. Learn to be picky with whom you listen to for advice. Seek the direction of older, mature believers, who have raised up godly children.

B. Do be focused on the spiritual side of the child.

1. The Bible does not disregard the need to be developed in a balanced way.
2. But the preeminent goal of all parents is to raise godly children.
3. 1 Timothy 4:7-9.

“But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance.”

4. This is utterly critical for each parent to understand. We must constantly examine what you are doing, and what you are hoping to develop in our children.
5. Ask yourself these questions:
 - a. Do I pray for the spiritual development of my children?
 - b. Do I set godly examples for my children to see?

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- (1) Television shows and movies watched (cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:3).

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality.”

- (2) Language used (cf. Ephesians 4:29).

“Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.”

- (3) Business practices.
- (4) Money management.
- (5) Issues related to self-control.
- (6) Marriage roles.
- (7) Decision-making.
- (8) Leisure activities.
- (9) Church relationship (cf. Hebrews.10:25).

“. . . not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.”

- (10) Gossip (cf. Proverbs 20:19).

“He who goes about as a slanderer reveals secrets, Therefore do not associate with a gossip.”

- (11) Obeying the law.

- (a) Romans 13:1

“Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.”

- (b) 1 Peter 2:16-17

“Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God. Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.”

- c. Do I ignore biblical commands because I don’t “agree” with them (cf. James 4:17)?

“Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.”

- d. Do I discuss the reality of sin with my child?

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- e. Do I understand exactly what the Gospel is and do I personally believe it and can I properly teach it to my child?
- f. Do I strive to bring the person and presence of God into everything we do (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:31).

“Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

- 6. Having a child who excels in school is not the goal.
- 7. Having a child who is popular or well-liked is not the goal.
- 8. Having a child who is well behaved is not the goal.
- 9. Having a child who professes to be saved is not the goal.
- 10. The goal is to raise a child who shows a personal, growing relationship with the Lord. The child models being a disciple of Jesus Christ.
 - a. This should show itself in all aspects of his or her life.
 - b. Remember that Ephesians 6:1-3 is speaking to a Christian child.

C. Do be consistent.

- 1. Both parents must be on the same pathway regarding the training of their child.
 - a. It is here that the headship/submission model of the Bible comes into full play.
 - b. Christ Himself said that a “house divided against itself will not stand” (Matthew 12:25).
 - c. The Bible says that a wife can build her house, or she can tear it down (Proverbs 14:1).

“The wise woman builds her house, But the foolish tears it down with her own hands.”

- d. The foolish husband will give the leadership and development of the house over to the wife and rob it of the blessing God gives to obedience.
- 2. Begin to set basic goals that need to be accomplished. Don’t look so far down the road that you become discouraged with the amount of effort it will take. Remember that God will always support, strengthen, and direct those who are obeying Him.
 - a. Over the past weeks you have been taking inventory of the current state of your house, your marriage, and your children.

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- b. Take two or three areas that need to be changed and begin to put the changes into action.
 - (1) One example would be in the area of marriage roles. If the wife is used to being the final say, or she manipulates the conversation to get her way, then this would be a key area to begin to stop. The wife needs to begin to ask her husband for his direction and goals. The husband needs to start making decisions. And both need to begin to pray for one another.
 - (2) If your child whines or cries whenever things don't go his way then begin to discipline him immediately. Explain to the child that whining is rebellion. Tell him that from this point forward he will be spanked for whining with no more warnings. He will also not receive the thing that he was whining about.

Parenting in Practice

Ted Tripp seems to argue against punitive measures in his book, *Shepherding A Child's Heart*. I believe that what he is arguing against is the type of punishment that carries no instruction or training aspect with it. As he illustrates on page 86, grounding is very easy to do but it does not address the heart issue. Therefore, all the child learns is how to endure that time-frame of penalty. He also points out on page 85 that this type of correction is usually given in the way of threats.

However, the Bible abundantly shows that there are consequences attached to sinful choices. Some of those choices are potentially life-threatening.

Proverbs 19:19 says, "A man of great anger will bear the penalty, For if you rescue him, you will only have to do it again." This is a critical passage for all parents to learn and live by. The principle is simple; don't rescue a person from the consequences of sin; allow those consequences to occur so that the lesson may be learned.

What if your child was wanting to buy a bicycle, but instead of saving money, decided to systematically steal from your wallet small amounts of money and claiming to have earned it doing small chores? Yelling and screaming is not the answer. Threats will not help. Telling the child that he will never own a bicycle for the next 10 years is not the answer either. But neither is simply spanking him.

The answer is more complex than any of these. The first thing is to deal with the heart, for the actions of thievery and lying must be confronted from a biblical level. The parent needs to be able to show the child passages such as Proverbs 21:6, "The acquisition of treasures by a lying

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tongue is a fleeting vapor, the pursuit of death.” Here the parent is trying to teach the child that anything gained through a lie quickly fades. Another key passage would be Proverbs 12:22, “Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, But those who deal faithfully are His delight.” Now you would be looking deep into the eyes of the child and clearly telling him that God utterly detests those who love to lie. Then perhaps you would show him Proverbs 6:16-17, “ There are six things which the LORD hates, Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, And hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil . . . ” Here you can talk to him about the fact that not only was he lying, but that his heart was wickedly making these plans (what a great teaching moment regarding true salvation!) and that these are hated by God.

Now at this point you would need to spank him. But are you through? Perhaps. The child may be utterly broken over his sin, he is showing true repentance and he is seeking to set things right before God and man. But what if this is something you notice your child has a bent toward? Well, now would be a natural time to show him the natural consequences of evil actions. You may want to show him Proverbs 6:12-14, “*A worthless person, a wicked man, Is the one who walks with a perverse mouth, who winks with his eyes, who signals with his feet, Who points with his fingers; who with perversity in his heart continually devises evil, Who spreads strife. Therefore his calamity will come suddenly; Instantly he will be broken and there will be no healing.*” You may explain that because of the seriousness of his actions he has lost the privilege of owning a bicycle for a specific period of time (this will also help determine the validity of his repentance). You would also explain to him that he needs to first pay back all stolen money, plus extra, before he can consider buying any extraneous item (cf. Exodus 22:1, “If a man steals an ox or a sheep and slaughters it or sells it, he shall pay five oxen for the ox and four sheep for the sheep.”).

IV. Conclusion.

- A. For each parent and grandparent in this room, if you took to heart last week’s message and will apply this week’s message immediately you will begin to establish a foundation from which good things might be built.
- B. Humility and a long view of life are both so important to parenting.
- C. A desire to honor the Lord in this massive part of your life is critical. It is owning the words of Paul in Ephesians 4:1 where he entreats us to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called.