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The Drama of Parenting— Parenting 601

Ephesians 6:1-4

PowerPoint Presentation: None

Keywords: Parenting, Children, Family, Gender Roles

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I. Introduction.

- A. My goal today is to give a broad skeletal outline for parents to think about raising their children that is both acknowledges and celebrates gender differences.
- B. The need:
 - 1. Unless you are under a rock you are witnessing over the last 50 years a wholesale attack upon the similarities and differences between male and female.
 - a. Over the last 8-10 years this attack seems to have intensified, but in reality it is merely moving on into the next stage of the destruction of biblically derived understandings about humans and gender.
 - b. Now we read of transgender issues where stores and schools are rapidly changing policies regarding who is able to use which bathroom. Target recently was forefront in the news on this issue.
 - c. Terms like genderfluidity are actually thought to mean something.
 - d. I contacted KUSD to learn of their policies related to this issue and received only the vaguest of statements that they are currently undergoing revision. I have my concerns on what those revisions shall reflect.
 - 2. Our schools now have, in varying degrees, curriculum that is considered “inclusive” so as to teach that regardless of one’s sexual orientation or sexual preferences that everything is normal and good.
 - 3. Ask your older children how many people they personally know who practice a bisexual, homosexual, or transgender lifestyle and then sit and give that a long, serious thought.
- C. We know from the Scripture that there is nothing new under the sun. And this includes sexual confusion and perversion and gender rebellion.
 - 1. My goal today is not to speak against these specifics.

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2. Rather it is merely to use these as examples as the foundation of the need to seriously think about what it means to raise sons and daughters as Christians and as those who are conforming themselves to the age to come rather than this fallen age.

D. Key Introductory points:

1. I will only touch on this because I taught extensively on this when we looked in depth regarding marriage. The first three sermons of that series will fill in much of the gaps here.
2. First, male and female is not the result of evolution nor social constructs. They exist specifically because of God's determination.
 - a. Genesis 1:27, "And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."
 - b. Note how "man" is used to speak of humanity and then humanity is defined in only two categories: male and female.
 - c. Only these two categories are legitimate and all others simply reflect the reality of what the bible declares about humanity today. Rebellion against its Creator.
3. Second, both are equal in their personhood.
 - a. "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. " (Genesis 1:26-27)
 - b. Both male and female are made in the image of God. Which means that they are infinitely unique among all of the rest of creation and are infinitely valuable and to be honored.
 - c. Wayne Grudem makes this important observation: "[e]very time we . . . talk to each other as men and women, we should remember that the person we are talking to is more like God than anything else in the universe, and that men and women share that status equally. Therefore we should treat men and women with equal dignity, knowing that men and women have equal value" to God."
Building Strong Families, p. 29.

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4. Though these two points are true they do not mean that with regard to roles and responsibilities that there is no difference between the sexes. They are designed to complement one another.
- E. A wise parent works hard at understanding and embracing his or her role and calling before God.
 1. The first step of effectively raising young men and women is by modeling for them what each gender looks like.
 2. The second step is to then consider how the principles and commands of the Scripture work out within the household and in the individual make-up of the children.

II. Raising Sons.

- A. First, let me *urge* you to listen to my series on Boys to Men. That will help you in so many ways on the task of raising biblical men. I cannot emphasize this series enough.
- B. Second, if you have boys in your family buy and read, then re-read *Future Men* by Douglas Wilson.
 1. Keep re-reading it until his points are part of your actual thinking and acting.
 2. If you come to me regarding your son I will make you read this book so just do it now. And I will insist that you listen to my series on boys to men, so do it now too.
 3. Much of what you will ever hear from me on this subject is influenced by Wilson and then worked out in my own son's life. I am merely drawing from a few of his points here in this sermon.
- C. Your son is designed to be a lord or master.
 1. God made man to have dominion over the earth and all that it contains. This is explicitly taught in Genesis 1:26ff. It is reiterated after the flood when God states in 9:2, that all creatures "are under your authority."
 2. Therefore, this is what you are responsible to raise. To give that young boy the opportunity to rule and have dominion in his own little part of creation.
 - a. This starts in his room or the basement. Soon it will be the backyard and the streams and forests or the alleys and back roads.

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- b. A wise parent seeks to direct this basic makeup that God has given to the boy.
- c. You should not be exasperated because the cushions of the couch became a fort, though you may need to redirect it to something else.

Something my mother did without realizing it was to give me a small patch of ground that was “mine.” I could do as I wish with it. At first I conquered it by simply digging a glorious and deep hole that became my fort. Then later I filled it in and thought I might try to plant a garden. I grew radishes and carrots. No idea what I was doing and I didn’t care. I carefully cultivated it. I learned about thinning out the plants. I cheerfully pulled weeds and I gleefully ate the produce. Somehow two vegetables I did not like became quite tasty.

- 3. Give your son responsibility early on. Let him explore and plan. As he gets older give him things that he must work through with your help so that he learns about decisions and owning the consequences.
 - a. Accept that mistakes will be made and be calm about it. Plan for those mistakes and you will create a safe place for him to learn to lead and oversee.
 - b. When you see him delighting in abuse of things, creatures and people you must address it quickly. You frame it in terms of what a proper, good man does. God made him to care for this creation, not destroy, abuse or exploit it.
- 4. To be a leader means you make decisions. As your son grows give him opportunities to make decisions. Walk him through the “why” of his decision. Provoke him to think about it.
 - a. Attack passiveness in your boy. Which means you can’t be the one always making decisions and telling your boy to be quiet.
 - b. Doug Wilson says it well, “a man who waits around for *someone* to decide is abdicating his assigned role.” (*Future Men*, 10)
 - c. This also means that you cannot accept excuses from your boy. A Christian man accepts responsibility and that is the end of it. Excuses flow from pride and laziness and neither must be allowed to take root in your boy’s heart. That means you start early.
- 5. Caretaker and cultivator.
 - a. This is built into the cultural mandate of Genesis 1:28 and 2:15.

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- b. We need men who look at this world and see that it was made for them to care for it. That they are to take what is unruly and out of control and bring it into submission.
 - c. This means that we must teach our sons patience and to have eyes of faith. They must not merely see the seed go into the ground but, rather, they must live in anticipation of the harvest to come and order their lives around that hope. When you see impatience you see something as a parent that you must bring under submission in your son.
 - d. This means you also must expect him to be a hard worker. Do not shirk this duty. Your son should be working alongside his father and as he grows he should be given jobs of his own. You do him a huge disservice when you allow him to sit and play while you work.
6. They are to be raised as defenders and saviors.
- a. The first Adam failed here and sin entered the world. The second Adam, Jesus Christ, came and conquered sin and is redeeming His creation. Sons are to model that in a smaller way.
 - b. This is why Paul says that to love your wife as a Christian it is to look like Jesus laying down His life for His bride.
 - c. Praise your son when he stands in the gap and protects and defends the powerless and the weak. Even when it is not done perfectly make sure he is praised.
 - d. Teach him to face fear and be comfortable to do his duty even when afraid.
 - e. From the earliest of days teach him that a woman is a treasure who is to be protected and defended. Teach him to despise exploiting those who are weaker. If that means he has to fight, then have him fight.
 - f. Help them learn that the vast majority of times the need to defend and save will come in the way of words rather than fists.
 - (1) This means he must learn to speak and think well. Mumbling, slouching, and bad speech patterns must be corrected.

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- (2) Make them learn to speak in public settings. Sunday School classes, Community Groups or just with company invited over to the house.
 - (3) Your son may never become a public speaker but he should never be afraid to speak publically. So teach him to develop convictions that are sound and biblical and then to defend them.
 - (4) Never praise or excuse him for giving in to peer pressure. Even if his nature is to follow your job is to train him to follow the right people, Jesus Christ, you, his boss and such.
- g. Teach them to protect their mom and their sisters. Never shall they exploit their strength over a woman or they face the wrath of another man, their father.
- (1) Give them the responsibility to walk their mom and sisters to their cars.
 - (2) If their sister is scared they should be encouraged to comfort them rather than to tease them.
 - (3) As they grow older teach them well Proverbs 5 and the guard themselves.
 - (4) They are to be young men who protect the purity of women. This is a huge task today with sex is thrust into the faces of your sons and daughters at an alarming pace.
- h. Help them defend their sisters by giving them good counsel on how they conduct themselves in dress and actions around other boys. Have them speak honestly to their sisters and to warn them from boys who are fools and thieves of women.
7. They are to be thinkers and wise.
- a. Never have your son think that the work of intellectuals is somehow less manly. Help your son to push his mind and develop it to the fullest it can be.
 - b. Praise curiosity and fan it aflame. Show him fools and the cost of being a fool and then teach him wisdom from his earliest years.

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- c. This means you never allow for him to take the quick out regarding studying and learning. Teach him what it looks like to sit until a task is done and done well.
 - d. Make your child read, literally make him. If it means taking away all other distractions until he has learned the glory of a good book then do it. But also provide him with good books. Some will love reading, others must be trained to be a reader.
 - e. God has given us His revelation in a book therefore learning to read and read well cannot be an option for a Christian home.
 - f. Teach your child to read out loud and with good inflection.
 - g. Sound theology is a must so start it when the boy is three. When his mouth speaks folly and bad doctrine you are to correct and instruct.
 - h. As he learns to read give him sound books on doctrine along with books of intrigue, adventure and battles. Pilgrim's Progress is a great one to give him and to have him read repeatedly. Any book by N. D. Wilson will not let you or your boy down.
 - i. Give him a strong world view that is unapologetically Christian. Talk to him about what is going on around him and in the world of politics.
 - j. Teach him to shut his mouth. A wise man becomes wise by listening and attending his heart to those who are wise. That source of wisdom is to be you, his parents.
 - (1) Proverbs 29:20 Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.
 - (2) Proverbs 21:23 He who guards his mouth and his tongue, Guards his soul from troubles.
 - (3) Proverbs 17:4 An evildoer listens to wicked lips, A liar pays attention to a destructive tongue.
8. Holiness.
- a. Tolerating sin will only bring more sin. This is true with a pouting 3 year old and even more true with an angry 15 year old.
 - b. Hidden sin is a deplorable condition that ultimately leads to the downfall of even the mighty. Given time the seed of that hidden sin will bring about sins even the young man never wanted to commit.

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- c. When you find your son with hidden sins you show him how to leave them behind. Confession to his heavenly Father who forgives sin. Confession or restitution to the aggrieved party. Consequences fitting to the “crime.” Also continuing to direct him to the common means of grace such as worship, study, prayer and obedience.
 - d. This means that you must faithfully teach him what is right and pleasing before God. Do not think he will learn this on his own and most certainly our culture will not do so.
 - e. Proverbs 12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But a wise man is he who listens to counsel. Your son will assume he is right until you teach him otherwise. Your task is to early on gain his ear and then diligently keep it. The son who does not attend to the wisdom of his father is a son you have lost.
- D. Teach him to own his actions and not be a man of empty words.
- 1. This is an issue of trustworthiness and faithfulness.
 - 2. Proverbs 20:11 “It is by his deeds that a lad distinguishes himself; If his conduct is pure and right.” Stop listening to the words all by themselves, judge them in light of his actions. In other words, teach him to be a man of his word.
 - 3. Proverbs 10:26, an unfaithful son brings you misery.
 - 4. Proverbs 19:19, teach them that there are consequences, especially to foolish things said in anger. Save them from those consequences and you only show yourself to be foolish.
- E. Raise him to hope in God.
- 1. He will sin for he is a sinner. But a wise parent points him to the sufficiency of God. The call is to put his hope in Christ alone for forgiveness and life.
 - 2. As your son fails, and he will, help teach him that he can change and train him early in how to do this. Character can be changed (Proverbs 8:32-36).
 - a. The requirement for changing character (32-33).
 - (1) Listen.
 - (2) Keep.
 - (3) Don’t neglect/refuse.

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- b. The reward for changed characters (34-35).
 - (1) Blessing (happy, enviable).
 - (2) Life.
 - c. The result of unchanged character (36).
 - (1) Self harm.
 - (2) Death.
 - d. Replace ungodly character in your life with godly character (2 Peter 1:5-7).
- F. Tidbits.
- 1. A mother does not know what it is like to be disciplined as a man. She must be very careful to be diligent with it but not to assume that what she thinks should be going on in the boy's mind is even remotely present. A wise father is the primary discipliner of his sons as he knows what goes on in their minds.
 - 2. The challenge before many fathers is that they are tasked with raising godly men but they are not godly men themselves. So repentance starts immediately.
 - 3. As you listen to your boy talk about life, listen carefully for how much of it is him talking about what he will expect from others versus what he must demand of himself. And then confront him on it.
 - 4. Let boys test their strength. A bloody nose is not sin and a broken arm often brings many lessons with it. The strength of a young man is part of their glory as image bearers.
 - 5. Train and raise them to leave the home. Then encourage them to leave quickly. You do not help a son who is now a man but still living in his father's house. You merely delay his owning of his manhood.
 - 6. Money he makes is not for his pleasure. It is to prepare for the future and the provide for his future wife and children. Teach him to manage money from early on. Raise him to be generous with what God gives to him.

III. Conclusion.

- A. This is hard work but it is a good work.

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- B. Our nation and the Church needs men who are true men. Men of faith and of godly character. Men who are strong and brace and who live out their convictions to a watching world.
- C. If you have a young man in your household then God has entrusted his soul to you for you to raise. So embrace that with all diligence.

IV. Suggested Reading.

A. Girls.

1. *Christian Heroines* by Catherine Mackenzie
2. *Love Is* by Laura H. Martin
3. *God and Me for Girls Vol 1 Ages 10-12* by Linda Washington and Jeanette Dall
4. *God and Me for Girls Ages 2-5* by Lynn Marie-Ittner Klammer
5. *God and Me for Girls Vols 1&2 Ages 6-9* by Diane Cory
6. *God and Me for Girls Vols 1&2 Ages 10-12* by Jeanette Dall, Linda Washington, and Phyllis Harri
7. *Ten Girls Who Didn't Give In* by Irene Howat
8. *Beautiful Girlhood* by Revised by Karen Andreola
9. *Dad's Prayers for His Daughter* by Rob Teigen, Joanna Teigen
10. *88 Daddy Daughter Dates* by Rob & Joanna Teigen
11. *Raising a Christian Daughter in an MTV World* by Mary Ruth Murdoch

B. Boys.

1. *Gotta Have God for Boys Vol 2 Ages 2-5* by Lynn Klammer, Aline Heiser
2. *Gotta Have God for Boys Vols 1&2 Ages 6-9* by Diane Cory, Aline Heiser
3. *Gotta Have God for Boys Vols 1 & 2 Ages 10-12* by H. Michael Brewer
4. *Thoughts for Young Men* by J.C. Ryle
5. *Ten Boys Who Didn't Give In* by Irene Howat
6. *Future Men (Revised Edition)* by Douglas Wilson

C. Teens.

1. *Answers Book for Teens (Vol 1 & 2)* by Ken Ham, Bodie Hodge, Dr. Tommy Mitchell

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2. *God's Girls #1 & #2* by Karen H. Whiting
 3. *Start Here: Doing Hard Things Right Where You Are* by Alex & Brett Harris
 4. *Girl Talk* by Carolyn Mahaney & Nicole Whitacre
 5. *Growing Up Christian* by Karl Graustein with Mark Jacobsen
 6. *Craftsmen: Christ-Centered Proverbs for Men* by John Crotts
- D. General Parenting.
1. *What the Bible Says About Parenting* by John MacArthur
 2. *Gospel-Powered Parenting* by William P. Farley
 3. *Parenting Is More than a Formula* by Jim Newheiser
 4. *Withhold Not Correction* by Bruce A. Ray
 5. *Age of Opportunity (2nd Edition)* by Paul David Tripp
 6. *Shepherding a Child's Heart (2nd Edition)* by Tedd Tripp
 7. *Instructing a Child's Heart* by Tedd & Margy Tripp
 8. *Teach Them Diligently* by Lou Priolo
 9. *God, Marriage, and Family (2nd Edition)* by Andreas J. Kostenberger with David W. Jones