

# I'm a Parent Oh God, I need some help!

Because we are a house full of sinners!

Train up a child in the way  
Proverbs 22:6

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Parenting is like planting and developing a large oak. You don't see the full fruit of your labors until the teens and adult years. But the fruit or lack thereof, depends on what you do in the early years. Your goal is to receive fruit of righteousness.

Proverbs 22:5-7

Thorns and snares are in the way of the obstinate and willful; he who guards himself will be far from them.

**<sup>6</sup>Train up a child in the way he should go [and in keeping with his individual gift or bent], and when he is old he will not depart from it.**

<sup>7</sup>The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender."

What is the correct path for a child? Is it the way you were raised? Is there an absolute standard or methodology for raising children?

There is great freedom and responsibility in how we raise our children, but the command is clear – we are to raise them with a specific outcome “the way he/she should go” so that “they will not depart from it”

What is this “Way”?

Keep in context the two verses surrounding v6 and that will give us a clue:

- 1) V6 Warning - don't raise obstinate and willful (full of pride, self-centered children) and be aware of who you associate with for after them your children will follow.

Psalm 1:2-3 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers;<sup>2</sup> but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.<sup>3</sup> He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.<sup>4</sup> The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.

- 2) Vs 7 refers to a person who has self-control – the borrower is servant to the lender. The context is one who saves has great control in life than one who is constantly spending – out of control

# The Hart's Story

- Who we are
- Oh God, we need some help
- Uniting as a couple
- Our journey
  - Spiritually
  - Resources
  - Actions/applications

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Varina age 3 – she was in control, we were at odds –the extreme on how to parent

Decided to Work together with intention – not a lot of direction but we knew good sources – Growing Wise in Family Life by Chuck Swindoll, Focus on Family resources

Result:

- Parenting courses/book every other year
- We engaged in a Bible study or marriage study every summer
- Reading books together
- Discussions on parenting in non-conflicting moments

Resources we used

Actions /applications

- developing parenting styles, techniques, discipline for each child's uniqueness – one size does not fit all – adapting to our child

# Life's Journey

- Parenting is God's door into your heart
- Being a parent is as much about you and God as it is about you and your child
- God uses your children to expose, repent, teach, and direct
- God revealing himself to your children through you
- A good foundation allows for a lot of mistakes
- Redemption in all circumstances
  - No matter where you are or what you have or have not done, God can redeem any situation

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- Be open to God working in your life through your child. God exposes your sin through your children: anger, impatience, insecurity, not feeling loved, etc.
- How you view parenting may reflect how you view God:
- Harsh, strict, disciplinarian – correct behavior – rules, basic morality
- Loving, doting, relationship over righteousness – how you feel

God uses parenting and our neediness in parenting to draw us to him:

- Love for our children so we pray for them
- Love for our children so we seek to introduce them to God – salvation
- Care for our children so we seek God to provide
- Weep for our children so we understand how God weeps for us
- Patience with our children so we understand God's patience with us
- Discipline our children understanding that God disciplines those he loves.
- Repenting, believe, fighting as a parent always calling to God for help

God will use you to show himself to your children. Are you available? Do you know God and who he is? Do you have a close, personal relationship with the Father on a daily basis? Do your children see you engaged in the Waltz: repenting, believing, fighting? Do you share your waltz story with your children. There is a very high probability that their faith will only be as real as your faith.

A good foundation based upon God as the center, marriage 2<sup>nd</sup>, and children third will allow room for a lot of mistakes in parenting that God will use to train your family in his ways.

No matter what mistakes you have made God can redeem any circumstance!

## God's Story Your Story, Your Children's Story

- God's story includes you and your children
- Each person has a special role to play
  - Your role, your children's role
  - Your children are God's. Have you given them to God? Do you parent as they are God's?
- Evil is seeking to destroy you: your marriage, your family and your children - hunts you
  - Parenting is a battle against evil
  - Are you living like it's a battle?
- God has created a fellowship to battle evil, restore and heal, build and send out

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1) You and your children are a part of God's grand plan. You are a part of the church and are loved as a child of God.

2) You have a special role to play in God's plan. Part of that role is being a parent. No one can fill your role. God has called you for a special role in his kingdom as well as he has called your children for their special role in his kingdom.

•How are you fulfilling that role? Do you have a plan; are you winging it? What is your road map in how you live your life, your marriage, how you parent?

3) Parenting is a battle against evil – evil wants to destroy you, your marriage and your children. Psalm 1 Blessed, (Happy) is the person who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, stand in the way of sinners, sit in the seat of mockers....

•Evil attacks in many ways – for the Christian, it is generally through society: materialism, prosperity, being a part of a social group/club, work, entertainment (Satan's goal is for you to believe that these things are more important than God). To make Christians ineffective, all he has to do is change our priorities – what we believe is most important: ours or our children's happiness over holiness, our children's social status or participation in sports over serving the needy, relaxing and being entertained vs. being responsible and learning a work ethic. Checking out with entertainment vs. engaging in the family living life based upon how we feel vs. doing what is right.

4) To fight this battle, God has created a fellowship: a) the Trinity – God himself in 3 forms b) the family as a whole c) the church – intentional growth in relationship/support and service to these groups is our battle plan – it is where we receive forgiveness, support, direction and rest and from this perspective, we engage.

# Goal of Parenting?

- Goal of parenting – train up a child
- Stages of parenting
  - Future – being a friend, a brother/sister in Christ
    - Response-able , responsible person
    - A productive, contributing member of Christ's church
  - Focus/Goal – develop moral behavior, moral concepts
    - Ages 1-8 discipline – your child becoming response-able – obedience, faith, learning, - *act morally then think morally*  
*Proverbs 23:7a For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he*
    - Ages 9-13 training –
    - Ages 13-20ish – coaching
    - Adulthood - friendship

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Micah 6:8 He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

-Morally responsive child who comes to know the salvation of our Lord

-Jesus wants your child's heart as well as their head: not only to do right but know the author of "Right".

2 components of parenting but one must be intertwined with the other for the child not to depart from it when they are old:

- a) Train the head - Raising a morally responsive child – do what is good, justice and kindness - can function on their own in society (socially, strong work ethic, law abiding, where they are contributing to society in a positive manner) – they know the moral reasoning behind the behavior
- b) Train the heart - Biblically responsive child – walk humbly with their God, they know Christ and the power of his resurrection, the redemption offered through salvation and the ability to live within and contribute to the body of Christ

The goal of parenting is not to raise a child to be your friend or to have no stress. If you do A and B then the outcome can be that your child is your friend. When parents do not have those two priorities, moral and biblically responsive child as their driving force in how they parent, then your upbringing, your insecurities, work, society, conflict avoidance, your child's happiness or social role....

Anything else will become the driving factor in how you raise your children.

The extremes are parenting based upon rules or parenting based upon emotions.

Rule based parenting does not give the moral and practical reason behind the instruction. Emotional based parenting which is based upon how I or my child feels has no moral implications

These concepts come from *Growing Kids God's Way* course by Gary and Marie Ezzo – *there is good material in their course, but I encourage using discretion for it does not incorporate grace as God's central theme. They do not teach the waltz in terms of repenting, basking in God's grace, then fighting.*

## God, You and Your Child

- Dealing with Sinners
- Responsible for you, what you teach your child
- Child is responsible for their response, their actions
- God's grace can redeem any circumstances
- Repent of past failures, Believe in God's truth (requires knowing the truth)
- Fight – what you can do

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Ephesians 5 :15-16 Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.

Remember, your child is a sinner, in need of God's salvation and continual grace. Your role as a parent is to point them to God. You are responsible for your response to God. You can't force repentance nor their heart to respond to God. You can help create the environment that can lead to repentance.

You are responsible to point them to God – through teaching the truth and modeling the truth. Their faith will most likely only be as real as your faith.

If you have past failures, you can begin today to be a better parent. Being a good parent requires honesty, transparency, continual repentance, believing God's truths and working to live out God's truth i.e. the Waltz: repent, believe, fight

There is no "one size fits all" parenting style. The Bible gives great principles on parenting starting with the 10 commandments but does not give the "how to's" of parenting. Every child is unique with their own personality. Your job as a parent is to raise them within their personality. If they are sensitive then be sensitive in correction. If they need firmness, you must be firm. You must parent based upon Biblical principles but apply them in context of who your child is.

Teach your child how to worship – model this – more is caught than taught

Teach your child how to repent – true repentance to God and to others

Teach your child the truth of who God is, their sinfulness and need for a savior – point them to God

Teach your child how to act in response to God – do justice, love mercy, walk humbly

Teaching is done best by words and actions – children learn best participating with you.

# Parenting

- Relationship priorities -
  - #1 God - the family as a worshiping unit
  - #2 Marriage – a growing marriage is great soil
  - # 3 Children
    - Parent to Children relationship
    - Sibling to Sibling
    - Your children to others
  - #4 Being a productive member of society - service
  - #5 Being a whole, well rounded child – well adjusted

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#1 Priority is developing a God-centered family – We are creatures created to worship. In worship we can experience God on all levels: rational, volitional (will), emotional and in action – love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. Your role is to teach your child who God is and how to respond to God's call on their life. Your goal is to have your child able to respond to God -

Most get this backwards. Their focus /goal is to develop a well-rounded child so they spend all their time/energy on the child, what they think is good for the child. It becomes child-centered parenting. A child is most secure when the marriage and home life is secure. All the world can fall apart around them but they can survive because their home is in tack.

Child centered parenting produces a self-centered, unproductive, unregenerate child who's focus is on pleasing themselves, their self-actualization outside of Christ and others. This teaches your child to never be content.

Less is more concept – Going deep into worship, family, friends versus more activity builds a solid foundation. Saying No to many things so you can have richness in a few.

#2 A great marriage creates the foundation for great parenting. A stable marriage eliminates stress, creates a sense of security for the children.

#3 – Children

Parent to child relationship – obedience, respect, honor – children honor your father and mother, fathers don't embitter your children

Sibling to Sibling – love on another, encourage one another and build each other up

Children to others – respect, encouragement, honor – do to others as you would do to yourself

#4 – Productive member of society – work ethic, values others, law abiding citizen, contributes, not a taker, can play well on a team

#5 Well-adjusted child – if you keep the priorities in order, you have a very high percentage result of developing a well-adjusted, functional, God fearing child. If you make #5 your 1<sup>st</sup> priority, you tend to create a self-centered, disobedient child in the teen years.

God can redeem any situation, any person!!!

#### References

- God is first – creator, redeemer
- Marriage is 2<sup>nd</sup> – wholeness, oneness,
- Children 3<sup>rd</sup> – parent, siblings, others

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### Marriage

- Genesis 2:18-23 I will make a suitable helper for him – Marriage came before children, “two become one flesh” – one flesh physically, emotionally, in reasoning and in spiritual life
- Colossians 3:18-19 Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.  
<sup>19</sup> Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.
- Ephesians 5:21 - Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ

### Parents and children

- Exodus 20:12 Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you
- Matthew 15:4 For God commanded, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’
- Ephesians 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right
- Colossians 3:20 -21 Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord, Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

### Siblings relationships/ parent relationship

- Romans 15:5 May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus,
- I Thess 4:18 Therefore encourage one another with these words
- I Thess 5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.
- Matt 7:12 So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets

### Your children to others

- James 3:13-18 Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. <sup>14</sup> But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. <sup>15</sup> This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. <sup>16</sup> For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. <sup>17</sup> But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. <sup>18</sup> And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

## Being Intentional

- You “gotta” have a plan - no winging it
- More caught than taught
- Engage in the battle – society is trying to raise your child – good, evil, no editorial response
- Parenting is a learning process – never “there”
- Your child’s best interest – not how you feel
- Adapt to your child – vicarious living, “according to you”

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How you parent is directly reflected in how you were parented:

• You tend to parent just like you were parented ( - the challenge is that you have a spouse that is thinking the same thing, so there is opportunity for conflict or sending mixed signals to your children. Your child will play parents against each other.

• Not like my parents – extremes – I’m not going to parent like I was parented – that typically means you go from authoritarian (rules) to emotions (feelings)

Examples:

– If your parents were too strict then you tend to be too lenient – not enforcing discipline because it doesn’t feel good for you or your child  
- You did not like your parents- your orientation/motivation is to be liked by your child

- If your parent(s) was not involved in your life – you tend to be child-centered, too much involvement where the child is the center of the family – this shows up in an overabundance of activities, giving your child everything, the child becomes the priority – not the marriage or the family as a unit

-If you did without, i.e. gave me nothing, you tend to give everything.  
-The overall question should be “Is this good for building godly character? Is what I am doing helping my child respond to God and to others? What is the goal for what I am doing? What fruit will it bear 5 years from now? Be aware that what too much of something can become bad... too much freedom, too many activities, too much money, or too many things at a young age.

## Relationship Priorities

### Family as a Worshiping Unit

- Role of the father in worship, mother
  - Knowledge, application, value
- You are your child's pathway to God – caught vs. taught
- Value of worship
  - Created to worship- our natural response
  - Part of a family –
  - Priority of worship

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### ***Already Gone: Why your kids will quit church and what you can do to stop it – by Ken Ham***

George Barna survey - six out of ten 20 *somethings* who were involved in church during their teen years are already gone! Too many are unintentionally training our kids that God, the church and worship has no meaning to their life. There is a huge disconnect of faith, worship and daily living. More is caught than taught. Christian parents are not modeling the importance of God, faith, worship, church and the Christian community in their daily lives. God is an add-on, not the central theme driving the family.

Worship is the center of family

- Make worship a priority – definition – worth ship of God – God as #1
- Worship is a battle – evil is pursuing you individually and through the culture
- Busyness, time, activities are you enemy
- Set life priorities – your child or your child's activities, your rest, entertainment, etc. do not take priority over a relationship with God personally, as a family, as a community! – other activities are secondary – we are created to worship – know God and enjoy his creation through worship
- Worship can take many forms – at home - in prayer, Bible study, serving your neighbors
- At church – worship, serving in Sunday School, serving others
- Community involvement, missions trips

Hebrews 10:23-25 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Children learn values from their mother. They apply the values that the father espoused and demonstrated. Dad's you must be engaged in worship! As goes the Dad in worship, so goes the family. The Dad is the leader and sets the priority. Worshipping as a family is more important than Sunday School. Your children will learn more about faith and the Bible from home and modeling what you do than they will ever learn in Sunday School, CrossRoads or Youth!!

## Worship

- Individual – your quest to know God: Bible study, prayer, small group, Sunday worship
- As a couple – couple Bible studies, praying together, sharing your faith journey, Sunday worship
- As a family – praying together, talking about God in life, Sunday together –not dividing up
- Encourage your children to spend time daily in God’s word, listen to worship music

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### Individual – daily – you must have a relationship with God –

Are you an Anemic Christian? Do you just feed on God’s word once a week or every now and then? Are you starving yourself in terms of worshipping God – knowing who God is? Is God just important on Sunday but work, sports, food, other relationships are more important the rest of the week?

Are you a bulimic Christian? You feed once a week then barf it up on Monday? God and church have it’s place and that is on Sunday.

If you are anemic or bulimic, then you cannot model to your children of the importance of God.

If this is a struggle and you lack the personal discipline to begin then you need support – get in a group to pray, hold you accountable, to be encourage. Get in a weekly Bible study with other men or women.

Your children and your spouse need to see you actively seeking God in your life.

Continual growth – your children will grow as you grow – more caught than taught

As a couple – discover God together in prayer. Do a Bible study together. Share your faith journey: struggles, fears, God working in your life

Encourage your children to get into God’s word. For younger kids, read to them. Teach them God’s history not just a “cute” story. Older children – get them an age appropriate Bible “Teen Bible” or something to read daily. Talk with them regularly about God’s work in your life their life.

# Summary

- Take home – best idea
- Now what - something to do this week
- Resources
- Questions
- Suggestions

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## Resources:

Small children : Steve Green –" Hide them in your Heart" DVD – scripture memory, Quigley's village for character, scripture Rock - Lifeway book store for resources, Familylife.com

Worship music – in the car, at the house

An older couple to mentor you... those who have gone before you

Too busy to read? Get these on CD and listen while you drive or workout!

## Books/studies parenting

*Growing Wise in Family Life* – Chuck Swindoll

*Already Gone, why your kids will quite church* – Ken Ham

*Shepherding a child's heart* – Tedd Tripp – book and workbook

*Age of Opportunity, A Biblical Guide to Parenting Teens* – Paul David Tripp – book

*She Calls Me Daddy: Seven Things Every Man Needs to Know About Building a Complete Daughter* – Robert Wolgemuth

*Different Children, Different Needs* – Charles Boyd

*Growing Kids God's Way* – Gary and Marie Ezzo – Gives a solid foundation for biblical parenting and gives great parenting tips and how to's, but be aware that there is a very strong bias as to their way is the only way and blames the parent for all child problems – can be seen as legalistic in many areas. Best balanced with grace centered teaching like *Shepherding a child's heart*.

*Parenting in the Pew – Guiding your children into the joy of worship* – Robbie Castleman

Resources from Family Life Today [www.familylife.com](http://www.familylife.com) – there is a whole section of resources for parenting: character development, spiritual development, discipline, sexual purity, being a Dad, being a Mom.

Life Leadership and the Pursuit of Happiness – Bill Hart [www.lifeleadershiphappiness.com](http://www.lifeleadershiphappiness.com)

# Best Practices for You?

## Session 3

- What has been most meaningful
- What have you applied
- Examples?

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## Parenting- Session 3

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## Creating Great Soil to grow your kids

- Creating a peaceful, nurturing home
- Children's peace and contentment comes from peace in the home
- Engaging in worship in the home as a couple
  - Praise God, share how God is working in your life
  - 3 H's as a couple: heart, head, hand -waltzing

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As a couple you are to demonstrate God to your Children. You are to introduce your children to God in 3 ways:

**Heart** – we are all sinners in need of a savior. Teach your children the Why's of God's love, God's commandments, his justice, mercy and love. Instruct in non-conflicting times. Teach your children how to go to God in times of need, in times of joy and in times of frustration, anger or hurt.

**Childishness vs foolishness** – as you instruct your child, instruct for childishness, correct for foolishness.

Childishness is that they did not have the maturity, learning, or skill to make the right decision. This is an age appropriate judgment. They may not have known what was wrong or what to do right. Also, it may be a cultural issue. The child may still suffer the consequences of a childish act but the consequences are used to teach the child. Repentance of the heart is not required.

**Foolishness** comes from the heart. They knew right and chose to do wrong. That requires correction, instruction and repentance. You must work to bring the heart to repentance.

**Head** – know scripture. Teach your children the truths of God through scripture.

**Hand** – model the Christian walk, the waltz, through action: in word and deed.

**Heart** = repentance, **Head** = belief, **Hand** = Fight

# Love

- Submitting to one another out of Reverence to Christ –Ephesians 5:21
- 4 questions –
- How we give and receive love is the foundation of how our home functions
- Your children’s contentment, adjustment, self-image, love for God, and love for others stems from how they give and receive love

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## 4 Questions:

- 1) Growing up in your home, how was love expressed among your family?
- 2) How did you experience receiving love? A) difficult, B) uncomfortable, C) Readily D) Deeply, E) other
- 3) How do you experience expressing love at home A) difficult, B) uncomfortable, C) Readily D) Deeply, E) other
- 4) Do you feel your spouse does not receive your love or your love is unappreciated?

## How to Say “I Love You”

- We are battling Evil in our marriage
  - Evil from within ourselves – sin
  - Evil from without –trying to destroy marriage, family
- We are commanded to love John 13:35
- Choosing to love fights evil
  - Die to self, live for Christ
  - Rewards are happy marriage, happy children
- <http://www.5lovelanguages.com/category/videos/>

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John 13:35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

John 13:34 – Jesus qualifies the type of love when he says “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

Jesus is our example of love so therefore knowing how to love correctly is VITAL to our Christian witness and the place to learn to love is the Christian home.

2 sides of love: giving and receiving – both must be in alignment to have the full, positive effect of love in the home.

Giving is the action side; receiving is the feeling side. Giving love can be frustrating for we don’t always know how well it was received, that our actions were actually interpreted as love.

Action and feeling are part of the equation of love and both, like other Biblical truths, are often violated.

The #1 million \$ question is: “How can I demonstrate love in an action so that the person that I am directing it toward actually receives love?”

## 5 Languages of Love

- Encouraging Words – praise and recognition - positive, specific, directed – I Cor 8:1,
- Acts of Service – doing something that the other will appreciate
- Gift Giving – “I thought of you”
- Quality time – relationship building, not distracted – giving yourself
- Physical touch and closeness

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I Corinthians 8:1 We know that “We all possess knowledge.” But knowledge puffs up while love builds up. “

Colossians 3:17 “And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

Ephesians 5:25 – Christ gave himself to the church – “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her”

Jesus blessed the children in Mark 10:13-16 by putting his hands on them. He healed people by placing his hands on them. His focus was on physical touch.

Your primary love language is evident in two ways: 1) you speak it most often and it is done naturally and 2) you feel most loved when it is spoken to you.

You have the ABILITY of speaking all five languages and you should be speaking them all the time. This is where death to self may come in. You may not want to speak a least favored language because you get no benefit or it makes you feel uncomfortable.

Most people won't speak their least favorite language because of how they feel or their fear of not getting it right because it is not their language. They sense no joy so they fear the other person won't sense joy.

Love your spouse, love your child in all five languages. Between age 7-10 your children will start showing more dominant love language preferences.

# Evaluate

## **Yourself**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

## **Your spouse**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

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# Evaluate

## **Your children**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

## **Your Children**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

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LANGUAGES OF APOLOGY

## Key Points

- When we feel loved, there is contentment and peace
- When we feel loved, we can love
- In love, we model Christ
  - In the home
  - In the world
- Many behavior problems are because a child does not feel loved

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If you can't model Christ in the home, then you are fooling yourself if you think you are modeling Christ in the world.

Know and practice your spouses and child's love language. This demonstrates Christ to them. When they feel loved, conflict is reduced, contentment is greatly increased, there is peace in the home. Your children trust you based upon how you love them. If they feel loved, they will trust you. If they don't feel loved, no matter how hard you work at it, they won't trust you.

[www.5lovelanguages.com](http://www.5lovelanguages.com)

*Five love languages of Children* – Gary Chapman

*Fall in Love, Stay in Love* – Willard Harley \*\*\* one of the best marriage books we have ever read. Do this as a couple – buy a book for each. Read during the week then meet for an hour and discuss the chapter.

*His Needs Her Needs* Willard Harley – the above book was written later and is more in-depth and I think a better couples exercise than *His Needs Her Needs*

*Ending the battle of the sexes: Reconciling Gender Expectations in Marriage* – James Mallory

# Summary on Marriage

- Love is feeling and action- a continual process of death to self, growth and joy
- Learn to love your children
- Teach your children to love others in 5 languages
  - Teach the Why of love – God's commands, Christ's demonstrations
- Work at it – Love and a good marriage doesn't just happen
- Having trouble with kids? It may not be rebellion!
  - Assess your marriage and how well you are loving your spouse
  - Assess how well you are loving your children in their language

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## Marriage as #2 priority -

### Benefits of a growing marriage for your children

- Creates a sense of security, eliminates fear
- Prevents lots of behavior problems
- Children learn to give and receive love by watching their parents
- Establishes a safe place for your child
- Concept of being loved and having a home
- Identity as a family
- Prevents divorce – you are teaching your kids what a good marriage looks like – it takes work so work at it.

You have a happier marriage – person you live with after kids are gone, less stress parent in less stress

Requires a plan and commitment – in priority terms, your children don't come before the marriage – they may take more time but not more importance. If they are taking all your time then you are out of priority.

Manage your activities too – make your spouse your priority

Steps to building a better marriage- plan:

- Monthly date night –even at home – our story
- Marriage time at home – especially with small kids – couch time
- Commit to do a Bible study together once a year
- Commit to do a marriage conference, book, study, every 1 to 2 years

You should know your spouse better than anyone else

Guard the marriage from your parents – leave and cleave Ephesians 5:31

Uniting in worship – from church to the home

Engaging daily in the Waltz of marriage – FATT

Marriage Ephesians 5:19-23 2 components (from James Mallory Ending the Battle of the Sexes)

Universal neurosis – battle of the Sexes – relates to the fall

- God cursed women's relationship
- God cursed man's performance

Be committed to loving your spouse the way God intended them to be loved

Women – no nagging – don't find your man lacking, become the faithful encourager – your kids need to hear you encouraging your husband

Husband – innovative initiator – engaging your spouse and meeting her needs without being asked – knowing your spouse's needs – being a leader

5 Love Languages – submit to one another out of reverence for Christ –video

Know your spouse love language

Be willing to engage your spouse in their love language – husbands this is innovative initiator

Resource: *Raising Responsible Kids: Ten things you can do to prepare your child for a lifetime of independence* – Jay Kesler

## Parenting- Session 4

- Relationship priorities -
  - #1 God - the family as a worshiping unit
  - #2 Marriage – a growing marriage is great soil
  - # 3 Children
    - Parent to Children relationship
    - Sibling to Sibling
    - Your children to others
  - #4 Being a productive member of society - service
  - #5 Being a whole, well rounded child – well adjusted

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#1 Priority is developing a God-centered family – We are creatures created to worship. In worship we can experience God on all levels: rational, volitional (will), emotional and in action – love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul , mind and strength. Your role is to teach your child who God is and how to respond to God’s call on their life. Your goal is to have your child able to respond to God -

Most get this backwards. Their focus /goal is to develop a well-rounded child so they spend all their time/energy on the child, what they think is good for the child. It becomes child-centered parenting. A child is most secure when the marriage and home life is secure. All the world can fall apart around them but they can survive because their home is in tack.

Child centered parenting produces a self-centered, unproductive, unregenerate child who’s focus is on pleasing themselves, their self-actualization outside of Christ and others. This teaches your child to never be content.

Less is more concept – Going deep into worship, family, friends versus more activity builds a solid foundation. Saying No to many things so you can have richness in a few.

#2 A great marriage creates the foundation for great parenting. A stable marriage eliminates stress, creates a sense of security for the children.

#3 – Children

Parent to child relationship – obedience, respect, honor – children honor your father and mother, fathers don’t embitter your children

Sibling to Sibling – love on another, encourage one another and build each other up

Children to others – respect, encouragement, honor – do to others as you would do to yourself

#4 – Productive member of society – work ethic, values others, law abiding citizen, contributes, not a taker, can play well on a team

#5 Well- adjusted child – if you keep the priorities in order, you have a very high percentage result of developing a well-adjusted , functional, God fearing child. If you make #5 your 1<sup>st</sup> priority, you tend to create a self-centered, disobedient child in the teen years.

God can redeem any situation, any person!!!

## Parent's Role/Relationship

- Building Mutual Trust and Loyalty within the family
- 3 levels of Parenting
  - Biological
  - Environmental/cultural parenting
  - Mutual trust and loyalty –
    - bonding relationships
    - Family identity

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Biological – do I need to explain that?

Environmental/cultural -physical needs: food, clothing, entertainment, education  
– focus is on existing or participating in the environment or culture

Mom's – maid, chauffeur, cook, entertainer, servant

Dad – provider, protector

Both roles are about satisfying needs and wants of the child – this is where authoritarian or permissive/feelings based parenting takes place

The challenge with environmental parenting is that the environment or culture, the immediate need, activity, etc. controls the function and focus of the family. The family is in reaction mode versus responding or being proactive

Symptoms: Dad's physically there but not mentally engaged with the wife or children. Dad's view is that his work is done once he comes home and he should be served or has the right to check out in front of the TV, newspaper, sports or the Internet.

The TV becomes more important than the marriage or family relationships.

Moms – busy always doing – getting things done because they have to be done. Involved with a hobby, Facebook or even serving the church.

Both – hobbies, Facebook, Internet, “doing the “I have to” urgent things.

Families should live their lives in the important, not urgent quadrant!

## Your Priorities In Family Development

Important	Important
Urgent	Not Urgent
Crisis or sickness	Family prayer, Worship, reading the Bible
Behavioral issues, conflict	Family dates, talking with your children
School issues	Character building activities, Health
Deadline driven projects	Eating together as a family
Not Important	Not Important
Interruptions/ phone calls	Email, Facebook, Internet
Sports, dance, other extra curricular?	Hobbies?
Getting dinner ready	Entertainment: video games, movies
Workaholic?	
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It is easy to live life in the urgent and not important mode of quadrant . Feeling you MUST do because that's what the world is doing. You feel like you are part of the rat race but that is what every other parent is doing. Well, you don't! Live in the important quadrants, not the Not Important.

The clock should not run the family. If the family is being run by schedules: i.e. ballet or football practice, a TV show, school, work, etc. then the family is being run by the world or the popular culture. Evil is hunting you and this is the way it catches you! The clock and schedules should not dominate or control you family's life! Activities should not be the central driving force of your family's life.

Parents should not be driven by time but re-orient time to meet the family needs. In parenting there is not a choice between quality time and quantity time when raising children. Time should not be the determining factor, your child's spiritual and emotional needs should determine activities and the amount of time spent on the activity. Time is not the goal; building a healthy, trusting, relationship with your child should be the focus of your activities.

Assess your child's activities based upon this criteria: Is what my child doing going to further family trust and relationship, develop their heart into knowing their savior, develop Godly character or give them a skill to serve others or function with others? Will this activity cause them to be self-focused or others focused. Will they appreciate God and others or will they focus more on themselves and their desires?

What they are doing, i.e. activity, may not be as critical as to why you are doing a specific activity.

**Activity: Have a discussion with your spouse and evaluate your activities based upon the 4 quadrants. Write down your activities in each quadrant. See where you are living and what needs to be intentionally changed.**

## Building Trust

- Quality of relationship?
  - Dad's – do they trust you or go to Mom?
  - Mom's – are you critical, cynical, controlling
- Trust is the foundation of a child feeling a part of the family
- Dad's play the key role
- A child should trust his/her Dad more than peers – otherwise peers will rule = teenage rebellion

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Building a trusting relationship with our children should be our first consideration as parents, especially fathers. Activities and how much time you spend with your children is secondary. Fathers have more trouble building trust with their children than do mothers. Mothers tend to be more nurturing and thus develop trust. But, mothers can be controlling, cynical, or manipulative trying to have the children apply the correct behavior.

“What is trust? For a child, trust is the bridge linking his need to know he belongs with actually belonging, his need to know he is accepted with actually being accepted, and his need to know he is loved with actually being loved.” (Gary Ezzo) The bridge of trust built and maintained by parents, **but especially fathers**, secures the child's need to feel connected to his family.

When a child does not feel connected to his/her family, the child will seek other “family” to be connected to, i.e. peers, Facebook friends, teammates, boyfriend, girlfriend. When a child trusts his/her parents they will believe in moral purity, believe in a God who cares and loves them. Without trust, moral values have no place in their life. A child who does not trust will not heed your warnings, but will play the fool.

The root of rebellion is generally lack of trust. Fathers play the most important role in building trust in the family.

# Role of Parents

- Create a strong family identity
  - Be devoted to one another as Christ is devoted to the church
- Permissive parenting fosters independence
  - Doing what is right in his/her eyes
  - Leads to a fragmented family
- Authoritarian – rules based is a façade
  - Requires conformity out of fear and duty
  - Lacks desire and devotion
  - Abandon family once leave home – no loyalty

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The goal of parenting is to develop and foster a healthy, loving, godly family being devoted to one another as Christ is devoted to the church. Your activities, your free time even your entertainment should take into consideration the affect on the whole family. Ask yourself “Will what I am doing or my child is doing foster family development, trust and celebration of the family as a unit?” If not, adjust and make it so.

Ice Skating example, rodeo example. One event per child

Warning – too many activities where the family is being spread out or separated is not healthy for the child or the family. A continual, non-stop sports schedule where the family functions around a child’s sport schedule is unhealthy. It teaches the child that they are as an individual, more important, than the family as a unit.

Permissive/feeling based parenting teaches the child that he or she is the standard and that their conscience, their identity is centered in themselves. They decide what is right or what is best for them outside of the context of Biblical principles and the impact to the family.

Example – state track meet – impact on family

Authoritarian – rules based parenting requires conformity out of fear and duty. Typically manipulation or “cause I said so” is used to get conformity. Guilt is a frequent tool to use to get behavior.

## God Given Desires Created in God's Image

- Be apart of something larger – the big story
- Relationship, valued, pursued, understood
- To have impact or significance
- To protect and provide, be protected and provided for
- To come through, duty, honor, respect, “Well done”
- Beauty and creativity, adventure
- Justice and freedom
- To experience joy

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Since we are created in God's image, God has given us deep desires that drive our thinking, our emotions and ultimately everyone's behavior. Our behavior's are driven to fill these desires. This list is not complete, but a good representation. We a sinners, rebelling from God will use idolatry, deception or manipulation to fulfill these desires. Your child's private world is where they will openly share their desires.

Children will share their deepest desires, i.e. exposing their hearts at times of misbehavior or at times where they are quiet, wanting to share with mom or dad what they are thinking, feeling and desiring. As a parent, be careful how you respond to your child's sharing of their desires.

## The Need for Trust

- Trust starts with God, John 3:16 – God’s love
  - Zeph 3:17 – rejoices over you, love, singing
- Children learn to trust God through their parents – how well do you trust God?
- Children respond to instruction and correction when they trust you – relates to God
- Trust built in the early years reaps huge rewards in the teenage years
- You can begin anew today - Waltz

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There is no magic formula in parenting. Parenting is waltzing continually going to God for forgiveness, believe in his principles and apply them in the fight step.

God does not give us a “How to” manual for our kids for each child is different as we are different. God’s word is sufficient for it is full of principles of truth. But, God’s word alone is not the answer. God wants an intimate relationship with you and your children for you are made in his image and are crowned with Glory and Honor (Psalm 8).

Parenting therefore is a process built upon a relationship with the creator of the universe who has given us principles by which to live and raise our children. These principles are for our good and our children’s good. God is not a killjoy but a loving father who knows evil is seeking to destroy you.

Your role as parent is to teach your children these principles and instruct them in righteousness which includes love, instruction, correction and discipline. A father disciplines the son he loves. But, to do this most effectively, you need to be fighting for your children on your knees first. You need to be pursuing your Father in heaven for wisdom, guidance, his love and protection.

Tie your correction back to God’s commands and that you are God’s minister, God’s steward of them. Your love, correction, discipline is instructed by God. God and the Bible is the standard, not how you feel. Focus on your child’s heart and their need for God in your parenting.

## Suggestions for Building Trust

- Trust in our Father – God can be trusted
  - Trust in the marriage – stabile, safe
  - Trust in you individually
- Parents are to build relationship
  - Honor and respect to parents
  - Honor and respect of children
- A trusting relationship gives credibility to:
  - Your faith and Biblical principles
  - Your instructions, correction and discipline
  - You over their peers

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All trust must be built from God's word, not human wisdom. If Dad and Mom are giving human based reasoning for why you do things, but then say that God, the Bible and the church are important, your children won't trust you. Your actions are louder than your words. Your instruction must be based upon God's word and your children should hear the foundation of your instruction, i.e. what God says, for God is always trustworthy.

God has ordained Dad's to lead the family. A Dad's role is to be more than just provider and protector. A Dad sets the course for family direction, family faith, worship and trust. Dad's where you spend your time will tell your children what is most important. Where you spend your money will tell your children what is most important. How you talk about God, your wife and others will tell your children what your true moral principles are.

Dad's 3<sup>rd</sup> most important job after having a loving relationship with God, then your wife, is to build relationship with your children, a relationship built upon trust.

For both parents, what you do with your children should not be driven by quantity or quality of time or what the culture says is important. The needs of your child should drive your activities with them: spiritual development, their character development, emotional needs, physical needs, social needs and skills. What does your child need from these perspectives should determine how you raise your child. For each child it may be different.

## Build Family Identity

- Mutual acceptance of who you are as a team
  - God has you together representing Him to the world
  - The team is counting on each person
- Create a family mission statement
- Talk about the family ... We are the \_\_\_\_\_
- Dads are key in verbalizing the importance of family

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Building family identity gives your children, and your spouse, a sense of oneness and belonging to something bigger than themselves. It gives a sense of security knowing that others are watching their back. Family identity creates loyalty and bonding.

Make statements like “We are the Harts and we love each other. “

“The Harts stick together. We watch out for each other.” “We are best friends as a family.” “The Hart family serves together.” “This family needs you and you play an unique role in this family.” “I am glad that God created this family.”

Dads verbalize how pleased and excited you are to be apart of this family. Do it regularly! For example- talk about the goodness of your family while driving, eating or at the end of an event. Verbalize how much you love your spouse in front of your kids.

“Dads talking about the family adds credibility to his role as the head of the home and gives the children confidence in knowing that Dad is on board.” Gary Ezzo

By cultivating family identity you are creating and aiding in building trust into the unit and individually.

Learn to play as a family. We played in the yard together. As they got older, we would go on a family date night, go to Sonic then play laser tag.

## Demonstrate Love for your Spouse

- Husband love your wives
  - Be innovative in love languages
- Wives honor your husband
  - Word and deed
  - Faithful encourager
- Girls – is Dad caring, sensitive
- Boys – is Mom safe, encourager
- How you treat your spouse is teaching your son/daughter in how to treat their spouse

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They way your children see you loving your wife will build trust with your children. The way they hear you talk about your wife will solidify that Dad can be trusted. Children want to see their parents loving each other. This gives them great security! Loving your wife comes first before loving your children because by loving your wife, you ARE loving your children. Children need to know that the family, as a unit is a safe and secure, stable place.

Husbands be an innovative initiator to love your wife in her love language. If you wait until she asks you, you have disappointed her. Women want men to lead, i.e. initiate, and they want men to be innovative in loving them.

Wives – You must speak positively about your husband in front of your children. You must say encouraging words about their Dad. Never say discouraging, negative words about your husband in front of the kids. It creates insecurity and breaks trust.

If you have an argument with your spouse, repent, confess your sins and demonstrate love to your spouse in front of the kids. Affirm to your children how much you love your spouse!

Wives – men want women who honor them and encourage them. They don't want to hear how they fail. They want to hear "Well done" and be respected. If you do that, even though he is only doing a "Well done job" 10% of the time, your encouragement will cause him to do more!!! Nagging, discouraging words causes anger in men and causes them to withdraw. Men don't talk to men disrespectfully so neither should a woman!

"The greatest emotional of a child is to know that Mom and Dad love each other" Ezzo

## Respect Your Child's Private World

- Listen with your heart as well as your head
  - Prov 4:23 – life flows from the heart, deepest desires
  - Don't try to fix or rationalize your child's feelings
  - Discuss and share how what they are feeling is real and OK, explore what is the deep desire
- Protect what they share – never use it against them!!
- Affirm them in sharing

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Children have private worlds where they let few people into their inner feelings, inner emotions. This private world may contain insecurities, deep desires, feelings of joy or pain. As a parent, especially Dads, listen with your heart first before your rational side. Don't try to refute or fix a child's private world unless they ask you for advice or what to do.

Be tender to your child's private world – this is where they are emotionally reaching out to you, the secret places of their heart, their deepest desires.

They expose their private worlds in times of one-on-one such as bedtime or walking together or when climbing in your lap. It could be in the car or after a hard day. Learn to listen first, ask a few questions and then thank them for sharing. Relate to how they feel and what they are concerned about. Don't try to fix!!!!!!

When children can trust their parents with sensitive issues and their parents, especially DAD, doesn't try to fix them or invalidates what they are feeling, this builds great trust!

Proving trustworthiness in vulnerable moments while kids are young will keep them talking to you when they are teenagers. If you shut a child off when they are young, they won't open up to you in times of conflict, insecurity or stress when they are teenagers for you are not trustworthy.

Thank your children for sharing with you.

## Keep Your Promises

- What are you characterized by?
  - Yes be Yes, No be No
- Keep your word
- Repent of your wrongs
- Make it right

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Are you characterized by keeping your promises, even when it may be inconvenient? Do you make promises then justify not keeping them due to some circumstance? Not keeping your promises causes children to not trust you.

Don't make statements that you don't plan to keep. For example "When spring comes we are going to the beach." Then you don't follow up on your promise. You may even deny you made such a statement. Or you may have promised to do something for your child which required your coming home from work early and you forgot. You did not see it as real important but your child did.

If you have broken your promises, repent to your child. Ask for forgiveness and give the specifics of what you did and how you were wrong in making such a promise and not keeping it. Your child will forgive you. Seek an apology by loving them in their love language.

If you made a promise, then fulfill it or ask the child if they would still like it fulfilled.

Be characterized by saying more "Yes" than "No"

# Freedom to Fail

- Freedom to fail, especially in the early years
  - Failure is an event, not a person
  - Help your children learn consequences through failure and how to make it right
  - Risk taking is good – God may be calling them into a risk taking calling – mission field, etc.
- Share your failures and lessons learned
- Kids Fear failing someone, not something – point them to God’s unfailing love, grace

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Give your children freedom to fail. Help them take reasonable risks. Respond to failures with encouraging words focusing on the effort and attitude that they put forth.

If your children fail due to slothfulness, being unprepared or disobedient, that is an issue of the heart. Failure in this circumstance is a consequence of sin. There are times when such consequences are perfect to get to the child’s heart.

There are two issues related to failure: heart issues and skill issue. If it is a heart issue, go to God. Teach your child to repent or help them learn to repent through negative consequences. If the issue is a skill, then encourage your child and discuss ways to have better results the next time. Base your love on them, not their actions.

Let your children fail in school, especially in the early years. They learn consequences and they also learn that you love them whether they succeed or fail. The issue is that you love them not based upon performance, but that they are your children!

Turn failures into teaching times, opportunities to identify and relate to your children. Use failure to discuss how they could have succeeded if they did something different or better. Focus on character development and relationship. Focus on how to achieve the desired outcome without degrading your child for failing.

In our family we ask “Were you adequately prepared?” “Did you do your best?” If so, then we accept failure. We may need to remediate to prevent future failure, but that is part of life.

Parents – don’t do your child’s homework!!!

Children don’t necessarily fear failure because failure is a part of life. They failed many times when learning to walk. You did not discourage them when learning to walk. What children fear in failure is being rejected by someone. “If I fail, I won’t be loved.”

## Little Notes

- Words of encouragement
- Share scripture, prayers
- Words of praise, words of wisdom
- Words of relationship
- Dads – sign Christmas and birthday cards
- Hand write notes to your kids
- Write them a letter or post card while traveling

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Children love to receive written words of encouragement for they can read them over and over. I used sticky notes to write little love notes to my girls and my wife. I have put them on their mirror, in their cars, in their lunch boxes, even in their clothes in their drawers.

Send them cards – every one loves to get mail. Email is OK but it has only 10% effect of what a hand written note will have.

Dads – hand write your child and your spouse a letter and mail it to them, even to your own house.

If you travel, send postcards or a “Miss you” card. I used to buy them before I left Birmingham and fill them out on the plane then mail them when I got to my destination.

If you have girls, send them flowers! If boys, order something appropriate.

Share wisdom in your notes. I send my daughter in college spiritual encouragement and life’s wisdom at least once a month.

Share scripture with your children through notes. Encouraging scripture, how you pray for your children. Col 1:9-12, Colossians 3:1-18, Ephesians 3:16-19

## Embrace your kids

- Regularly embrace your kids
- Get physical with them
  - Play with them
  - Love on them
- Embrace their time
  - Special dates – one-on-one

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Our girls loved for me to play with them in the yard or on the floor in the den in a tickle fight. Don't be too busy to play with your kids. On vacation, they wanted Dad to play with them even more than mom. Playing with Dad was special. Dad can introduce them to adventure. Playing and discovering new things with both parents builds trust.

Moms – get dirty with your kids. Go play kickball with your boys. Shoot baskets.

Be aware, on vacation, Dads want to check out. Playing with your kids during vacation communicates the importance of the family and builds trust.

Hug your children daily. Hold your children. My girls still occasionally sit in my lap. For dads to boys, hug them. Even giving your child a shoulder rub says "I care for you and love you."

One-on-one dates once a month –everything from ballet, breakfast, go kart racing to hunting.

## Praying for your children

- Colossians 1:10, Colossians 3
- Psalm 119: 120-135
- Ephesians 3:16
- Pray the Proverbs

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## Session 6

### Purpose of Obedience Eph 6:1-4

- Obedience essential for family government
- Honor one's parent is throughout one's life
  - Demonstrate honor through obedience
- Obedience relates to heart and deep desires
- Outcome of Obedience
  - Relationships – God and others
  - Function in society – go well with them
- Failing to teach your children to obey is not loving them

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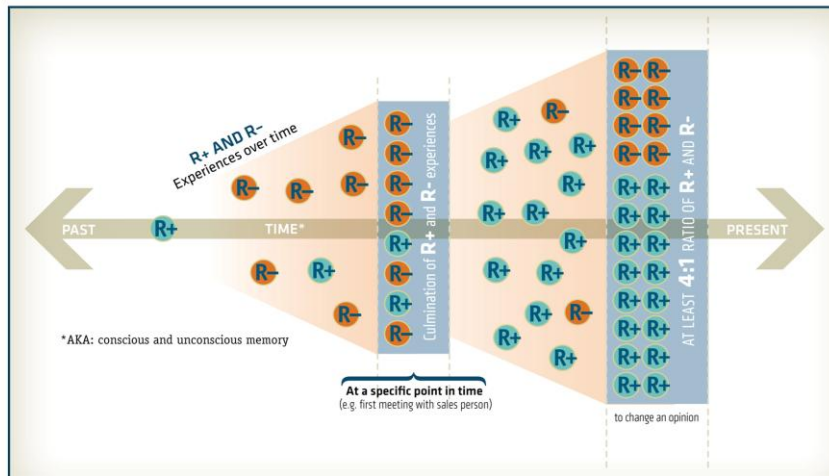
“Hebrews 12 makes it clear that discipline is not punitive but corrective. Hebrews 12 calls discipline a word of encouragement that addresses sons. It says discipline is a sign of God's identification with us as our Father. God disciplines us for our good that we might share in His holiness. It says that discipline is not pleasant, but painful, it yields a harvest of righteousness and peace.” Tedd Tripp – *Shepherding a Child's Heart*.

Eph 6:1-4

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. <sup>2</sup> “Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise— <sup>3</sup> “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” <sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Fathers, <sup>[b]</sup> do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

# The Future > Present



Excerpts from the course *GrowBig – The Art of Non-Sales* from the course module called *The Path to a Raving Fan*

Are you characterized as a encourager or a negative, “can’t do” person.

1 Thess 5:11 “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”

Heb 10:24-25 “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another —and all the more as you see the Day approaching. “

2 Cor 13:11 “ Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.”

It takes 4 positive events to overcome 1 negative experience. You must give 4 positive experiences such as words of encouragement to overcome your child’s negative experience with you. If you are characterized by always correcting but not encouraging, your child will not trust you or may not love you.

Be aware of your child’s love language in giving verbal correction for that type of correction may have a great impact on one child, more than expected, and little impact on the other child.

# Understanding Discipline

- Goal of discipline – restoration
  - With God, with others
  - Heart
    - Appeal to their conscience
    - God given understanding of right and wrong
  - See themselves as sinners, understand God’s mercy
- God is the standard – God’s word
  - Relates to you and your child

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Eph 6:1-4 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. <sup>2</sup> “Honor your father and mother” — which is the first commandment with a promise— <sup>3</sup> “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Fathers,<sup>[b]</sup> do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

The goal of discipline is restoration of relationship with God and with others. God uses discipline as a means to help a child understand that they are a sinner and that they need a savior. Discipline is used to show that there are absolute rights and wrongs which just confirms what God has already put in every person’s heart. Discipline is confirming what God has placed in the conscience.

Discipline provides the opportunity to go to God, receive his mercy and be restored in relationship. Confession is key to discipline – acknowledgement of wrong doing and repenting (turning away), receiving God’s grace and parental love and then making right their wrong through seeking forgiveness or restitution (the fight step).

If Parent’s are slack in discipline or even discipline incorrectly, you as the parent are sinning; you are not following God’s word and his commandments of honor, respect, love and train up a child in the way he should go. A parent’s responsibility is to train up the child. Training is an ongoing, pre-planned, well-thought out process, not based upon emotion, feelings, “winging –it” or even rules. Training is having a game plan. You may have to adjust that plan regularly but that is life. Are you engaged? Are you planning and learning the skills? Are you adjusting to your child and the context of your child and the situations or are you parenting based upon how you feel or how you were or were not parented. Are you trying to make up for wrongs done to you in how you parent?

Tie discipline to God’s authority, not yours. Relate the issue back to God and His standard.

# Training to the Standard

- Your job – God’s standard
  - Training – repetition
  - Teach, encourage, correct
  - Progressive – authority to influence
- Rebellion is the sin of witchcraft
- 1<sup>st</sup> Time obedience
  - Immediate, completely, without challenge
  - Without complaint
- No exasperation – cold, calloused, arbitrary

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1 Samuel 15:22-23 God rejected King Saul for rebellion

“Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams.<sup>23</sup> For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you as king.

As your child grows and increases in their learning and obedience your role will shift from authoritarian to influential. The goal is to be in a coaching role by the time of high school. This assumes they are obedient and can handle age appropriate freedoms.

## No Exasperation

- Not embarrassing them, punishing in anger or to get even or back at them
- Unreasonable, over punishing, capricious, unfair
- Inconsistency is exasperating to your children
- No degrees of discipline – same for all offenses, no learning opportunity
- For some it is the manner in which you discipline – according to their personality
  - Example – lecturing our oldest or being direct and short with our youngest
- Biblical discipline is not cold, calloused or arbitrary

-By requiring 1<sup>st</sup> time obedience the child is in total control of when they will receive correction. The consistency of God’s moral standard makes obedience objective, not subjective, since the parent will not react arbitrarily. 1<sup>st</sup> time obedience puts the pressure of compliance on the child, not you!! It reduces stress, it trains your child in the path of righteousness and it benefits others. Your child is obedient and a pleasure to be around for all. No one enjoys a disobedient child!

## Undermining the Process

- Feelings Based parenting – you feel, they feel
  - Your happiness, the child's or other people's
- Authoritarian – no Biblical reason, humanistic
- Threatening and repeating
- Bribing
- Negotiating in conflict
- Misusing compassion

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- Threatening/repeating – scare tactics, threats or it takes 3-5 warnings before child obeys

First coaxing, then threatening, then bargaining then pretending to punish and finally punishing a little only makes a bad situation worse.

Hope for compliance is actually greater than the will to enforce it. Inconsistency is not loving parenting for putting off discipline actually encourages the child to pursue self, to pursue sin and to allow the child's moral faults to gain strength.

This type of parenting is irritating to the child, not bringing the child to true repentance and restoration. If you are repeating instructions, the child will gamble on how many times it takes you to get serious. Children love to gamble for their benefit.

A parent's duty given by God is to show them the way to God, the way of righteousness and create the opportunity for repentance and restoration. Without discipline, the parents is encouraging rebellion. Yes, the Holy Spirit works in the life of the child, but it is through the parent that God has given the responsibility of teaching children about right and wrong, repentance, faith, grace and restoration. Without repentance there can be no restoration thus the child is encouraged to pursue sin!

- Bribing – threats, scare tactics or offering rewards for obedience

Making promises for obedience such as rewards, treats, gifts, privileges. The child should respond out of moral obedience to God, not for their lustful self-interest! Motivation is for self – “What will I get?” vs. doing because it is right. The outcome is that these children learn to manipulate and as parents use manipulative parenting techniques. Because they seek reward, they limit their ability to serve others unless they receive gratification!

- Negotiating in conflict

Given in during the heat of the battle. If you negotiate in conflict then you are teaching your child that everything is negotiable at least to some point. “A child's willingness to accept total surrender is the first step toward total freedom of self-rule . ” (Ezzo)

Children are surrendering their self-will for God's moral will as directed by their parents. If they negotiate with you they will think they can negotiate with God.

- Misusing compassion – only focusing on God's love and forgiveness and over looking a child's sin because God is love. That is misrepresenting God for he is also justice and righteousness and displays wrath for sin. God is not a God of indulgence and only compassion. This is not leading your child to repentance for their sin.

# Discernment

- Childishness or Foolishness?
- Childishness – Head, lack of knowledge or skill
  - Requires instruction, training and possible restitution
  - Reward for skills learned, goals accomplished
- Childishness can become foolishness
  - Slothfulness in grades, carelessness in doing something, repeat offense

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Childishness is a head issue - that your child did not know the rules or have the skill/knowledge/wisdom for what was required. This could be social rules or the ability to do something. Your child wanted to mow the lawn but mowed over the flowers because they could not control the mower.

Childishness needs instruction, head information, and possibly some training, to do it right. Childishness may require restoration in terms of restoring something that they unintentionally broke, caused a mess or need to apologize for not knowing the rules. Childishness may affect others but it is not done with evil intentions. A child would need to help clean up the mess they made at someone's house or the grocery.

Be sure that your child knows what you are talking about and the context. Childishness may show up because a child did not know how to apply learning in a contextual situation. (Going to the bathroom outside in the woods vs. using the neighbor's tree)

Instruct by not just telling *what not to do* but tell them *what to do* and give the reason for the instruction.

Role of Rewards – rewards are great for children to work toward, to earn in situations where it is a head or skill issue. A child can achieve an award for accomplishing a goal.

Examples: grades, sports, skills learned, goals accomplished or responsibilities demonstrated.

"You have consistently kept your room orderly and mowed the lawn this year, you have proven to me that you can take care of things, you may use my boat."

Rewards can be given after good behavior is given but should never be given as the motivating factor for good behavior. "You guys were great sitting still and being quite while I talked with Mrs. Smith, let's get some ice cream." Rewards can be given but should never be expected for the proper behavior.

# Foolishness

- Foolishness – is willful defiance, disobedient
  - Deception, trickery, disobedience, unwise rebellious behavior
  - Rebellion – active or passive
- Action to take
  - Frequency of the offense
  - Age of child
  - Context of the moment
  - Overall characterization of behavior

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*Foolishness* is a willful act of the heart – you must deal with the heart for head knowledge does not bring about repentance.

You can be sure an act was foolish when your child has already demonstrated an understanding for expected behavior in that situation. A foolish action will require more discipline. Exactly what you do and how you do it is dependent on the child. The child's age, frequency of the offense, situational context, and the child's overall behavior all factor in to deciding what to do. As the parent, it is for you to decide what to do.

Passive rebellion is indirect defiance. It begins with attitude and can show up in a haughty look, rolling the eyes or pretending not to hear or even pleading ignorance to the obvious after being caught in a misdeed. It may show up as doing something cute or good to get out of doing what was instructed. It often shows up as "I forgot."

Forgetfulness after being instructed is now an act of disobedience. For it is not the failure of remembering the instruction but the lack of effort or defiance in not learning the lesson or taking the instruction to heart. Forgetting may be a reason but it is not an excuse. You can train forgetfulness out of a child by logical consequences.

Sulking, pouting, complaining, and whining may also be subtle forms of passive rebellion.

If you deal with direct rebellion but ignore passive rebellion you are teaching your child that some forms of rebellion are acceptable.

# Correcting Foolishness

## Prov 29:15

- Goal is restoration with God and others
- 3 levels of correction
  - Communication
  - Communication and action
- Rod – pain and consequences
  - Act in faith – God’s command, God’s representative
  - Not capricious or random – specific, purposeful and controlled

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### Communication-

Parents must first communicate the standard of God’s righteousness and justice to children. The environment in which a child lives is the soil from which he/she learns: 3 components – loving, trusting, consistency of standards and practice.

Parents if you have failed in any of these areas, confess to your children and ask forgiveness. Tell them what the new standard and begin today. Any time you are inconsistent, tell your children you are wrong and that you must hold to God’s standard and hold them to God’s standard. You are a sinner and even if you do not model God’s standard well, that is your story with God. You are still to hold them to the standard.

If you don’t know the standard, then you can’t hold them to the standard so understanding God’s word and how it applies to parenting is crucial.

3 levels of correction – The goal of correction is to restore the relationship.

- 1) Verbal warning plus instruction – response is to be immediate. Instruction may be later. Warnings don’t need to be repeated every day. Also understand context.
  - Pre- warning – tell them the expected behavior before activity – going into the grocery store. Going to an event.
  - Instruction may be during other parents time of conflict such as the car next to you. 😊

- 2) Verbal correction with action – stopping an activity, loss of privilege, reflective time out (stop what they are doing and think about what they did – getting control of thoughts and actions

The goal of action is to bring the child to see their sin, reflection – Grounding without reflection is not affective. Example – writing Proverbs or other scripture. Restitution to a sibling via love language.

## Correcting Foolishness

### Prov 29:15

- Goal is restoration with God and others
- Rod – pain and consequences
  - Act in faith – God’s command, God’s representative
  - Not capricious or random – specific, purposeful and controlled
- Natural Consequences
  - Don’t let natural consequences control the rest of the family. – lateness, lack of preparation

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Prov 29: 15 The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother

Prov 22:15 Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him

Prov 13: 24 Whoever spares the rod hates their children, but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them

•The Rod – bringing pain into your child’s life for the purpose of creating opportunity for repentance, instruction, correction and restoration. Without the purpose of correction and restoration, the rod is vindictive and is punishment.

God calls us to use the rod. So a parent who does not utilize the rod in correction is in direct disobedience to God. A parent using “pain” to get to a child’s heart is acting in faith and obedience to God and is acting as God’s representative.

Using pain as a tool – spanking, loss of a very important privilege, loss of freedom, etc. is God’s method of getting to the heart. Such measures should be well thought out, both parents in agreement, not abusive, not done in anger, not vindictive or in frustration.

Using pain alone without communication of the standard is not affective. The offense may require pain, communication and action such as restoration, restitution or asking forgiveness from another.

## Suggestions

- Eye contact, verbal response, action
- Assuming their responsibility
  - Do you have the freedom to do that?
- Restitution or Restoration – make it right -
  - not the child's happiness or the event as the standard
- Speak in positive terms – not negative –
- Encourage 80% of the time
  - How are you characterized

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Eye contact with a verbal response then look for immediate action. Passive rebellion may give a “yes” response but no action. You may need to define when the activity needs to be done (giving a 5 minute warning is helpful to not exasperate a person). Example “Dinner in 5 minutes” or “We are leaving in 10 minutes be ready.”

When you are concerned that a child has not done homework or a responsibility and you see them doing something else ask “Do you have the freedom to do that?” Have you fulfilled are your known responsibilities?”

-If this is a skill – then take away freedom until skill mastered. Example homework or grades. Poor grades may also be from slothfulness which is a condition of the heart.

Our standard – “Do your best? Give your best effort in preparation? What could be done differently in the future?” If our child did her best in preparation and effort, we accepted the outcome. If not, then helped her learn to do better by whatever was needed – tutoring, loss of privilege/freedom, work around the house. Time studying vs playing.

Forgiveness – “Will you forgive me for.... Vs. “I’m sorry?” I’m sorry is self-focused and is not focused on restoration. I’m sorry can have multiple meanings. To aid in restoration, restitution may be needed. Consider how the child can make it right with the other person.

How you talk or give instruction is very important – be positive, not negative.

What you want, not what you don’t want (“Be on time” versus “Don’t be late” or “Keep your room clean and orderly” vs. “Don’t leave your room a mess.”)

Instruct to the desired outcome that way your child knows explicitly the standard.