

Proverbs A La Carte: Parenting

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[0:00] I'd like an amen on this next statement. Being a Christian parent is challenging. Being a Christian parent is challenging.

Amen. It is challenging. I mean, we're living in a world right now, in a culture right now, where we're one step closer to moral bankruptcy.

We seem like we are being handed over, Romans 1, by God to the desires of the flesh of our culture. And so it's challenging for us individually to navigate this season we're in in our culture. It's even more challenging to navigate our children to help them walk on the path of wisdom. In fact, many of us as parents, we will encounter hardship with our children.

We're going to have head-scratching moments of confusion. We're going to experience heartache when our children choose foolish ways.

[1:09] It's going to be difficult. And when we encounter those kinds of things, this is what our temptations are. We can be kind of like want to give up and check out. That's one option.

Another option is to kind of withdraw and to isolate within kind of a Christian holy huddle. And then there's always the, you know, I don't care at all whatsoever or anything.

And you just kind of blend into everybody else. Well, I'm so grateful that God's Word speaks directly to parents, Christian parents.

And God has us a way to walk, brothers and sisters, in order to raise our children in the fear of the Lord. And so here is the call that I want to put out early on all of you as parents and grandparents, brothers and sisters, moms and dads, grandmas and grandpas.

The call this morning is to be faithful to the Lord in your parenting. To be faithful to God in your parenting. Eugene Peterson wrote a book entitled *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*.

[2:18] Parenting is a long faithfulness in the same direction. Aiming our children at God over and over and over again. So this morning, as part of our study in the book of Proverbs, I'm going to do a bit of a survey of the book of Proverbs.

And I'm going to point you to six wise ways, six wise ways we parent our children to the Lord, how to be faithful to the Lord. And the first way is that wise parents fear God first.

Wise parents fear God first. Christian parenting doesn't start with your children. Christian parenting does not start with a parenting book and learning some skills.

Christian parenting starts first with God. Fear God first. In Proverbs 9.10, we learn that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Wisdom is a life skill of crafting a life that is pleasing to God. And you craft a life according to the fear of the Lord. And that word fear is better understood as kind of a reverence, a controlling reverence of your entire life.

[3:36] It's this controlling reality that governs all that you do. And all throughout this series, I've been trying to put a little bit of an illustration in your minds as to the central operating system of your computer, your life.

Proverbs depicts two ways to live, wisdom and folly. And there's two different operating systems at work in each of us. There's the operating system of the flesh, which moves towards folly.

And then there's the operating system of faith, which moves towards wisdom. And the operating system of the flesh, what is the governing reality of that system is me, is you, is what we want.

The world revolves around me. It's me centered. But the operating system of the faith, of wisdom, is God centered. It's God is the controlling reality of all of our lives.

And this is where I get to preach the cross right now to you. Because it's the cross of Jesus Christ that delivers us daily from the operating system of the flesh and delivers us to the operating system of faith.

[4:54] From living a life for me to living a life for God and His glory. Every day, the cross of Jesus Christ delivers me from the flesh to faith.

faith. An operating system in a computer controls all of a computer's applications. And the operating system of faith, fearing God above all else, it governs the application of parenting in our lives.

We will either be governed by our flesh in our parenting, or we will be governed by faith. If you turn in your Bibles to Proverbs 14, chapter 14, verse 26, we read this.

In the fear of the Lord, one has strong confidence, and his children will have a refuge.

You see the logic? When I fear God above all else, God uses that to refuge my children.

[6:12] There's two applications of this. Moms and dads, grandmas and grandpas. The greatest way to love your children, to raise your children where it all starts, the greatest thing that you can do for your children is to love God with all that you've got.

To fear Him above all else. To see who He is and allow that to govern all that you are. Every day, every morning, you need to go into the settings of your heart and disable, by faith, the old operating system of flesh.

You say no to that, and you flip on through the cross and say, I am going to live for the glory of God today. I am going to fear Him above all else because He is worthy.

Daily, you turn from living for yourself to trusting in Christ, and that's the best thing that you can do for your children. In the fear of the Lord, one has strong confidence, and his children will have a refuge.

But it also, another application of this is when you fear the Lord, and that's the governing reality of your life. It's the operating system, the program that's governing all other applications.

[7:24] You start to understand what the goal is in your parenting. For every parent, the goal is to raise their children to be a responsible adult. That's the baseline. But it doesn't go far enough for Christian parents.

For Christian parents, the goal is to raise your children to be responsible adults who fear the Lord. And that becomes the governing reality of our lives, of their lives.

And I think you're probably starting to feel right now this sense of, this is beyond me. And well, you should. The goal is to raise our children to become responsible adults who fear the Lord.

The strategy, then, is not behavioral modification. The strategy to that goal is to address our children's hearts over and over and over again.

Because your child's heart is the control center of their life. And when you address that as a parent over and over and over again, you train them. You train them in fearing the Lord.

[8:32] So we have the goal. The goal is to train your children to fear the Lord. The strategy is to attend to their heart. And now there are tactics to that. The way that you train a young child in addressing their heart so that they fear the Lord is going to be different tactically than addressing a teenager and addressing their heart to fear the Lord.

The same goal, same strategy, different tactics. Wise parents, fear God first. Moms and dads, grandmas and grandpas.

The call on your life is to be faithful to the Lord in your parenting. Wise way number two. Wise parents, obey God's call.

Obey God's call. If you flip in your Bible to Proverbs 22, verse 6, this is a classic Bible verse many of you are familiar with if you've been around the church.

But oftentimes, it's somewhat misunderstood. Train up a child in the way he should go. Even when he's old, he will not depart from it.

[9:46] And we can use that proverb as a promise. But that's not how proverbs work. A proverb isn't a promise per se as much as it is a truism.

Generally speaking, typically, when you raise up a child in the fear of the Lord, when he's old, he will not depart from it. What I want to emphasize in this verse is not the second half of it, but the first

half.

Because in the first half is a command. It's an imperative. Train up a child in the way he should go, in the way of wisdom, in fearing the Lord.

It's a command, brothers and sisters, moms and dads, grandmas and grandpas. It's a command to us. God is calling us to train up our children in God's ways.

It's not just a good idea. It's not something you acknowledge as a parent and then move on with the rest of your day. It's something you obey. Take it to heart and you act on it.

[10:56] Now, I want you to imagine a dude ranch in Wyoming. And as you're looking at this dude ranch, you come into sight of this circular pen.

It's fenced in. And in that pen, in the middle of that pen, is an old-season cowboy. And in his left hand, there is a rope leading to this thoroughbred stallion.

And that stallion is running around the circumference of that pen. And that rope is attached to the stallion, the bit and the bridle on that horse.

And on the right hand of this cowboy is a long stick. And he is tapping the rear end of that stallion.

And he's prodded on. And that stallion is moving around, going from right to left in the pen, day after day, week after week.

That cowboy is training that stallion to feel the pressure. Feel the pressure on the bridle and bit and respond to the slightest tug in the bit and bridle.

[12:06] And it turns left. And then he turns that stallion around and puts the rod in his left hand and the lead in his right. And he trains that stallion to pull to the right day after day.

Week after week. Training. Purposeful. Diligent. This cowboy sees the potential in this stallion.

And above all else, he wants that stallion to ride trails well. We're not raising stallions. We're raising image bearers.

We're raising worshipers. And it takes careful, diligent, patient, purposeful training over and over and over again to help our children respond to the slightest tug of God's word.

To go to the left as God would have them or go to the right and to walk on the path of wisdom. Our goal as moms and dads is to train our children to fear the Lord so that they fear Him when they leave our homes.

[13:30] So that they know how to walk the path of wisdom. Because we have labored to that end in their lives. Now, I want to let you know that a family is not a boot camp.

The way we train our children is not by having a sergeant yelling at our kids. The way that we raise our children is what Paul Tripp calls a loving, learning community.

That's what a family is. That's God's design. That's Deuteronomy chapter 6, 4 through 7, the Shema. Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God the Lord is one. You shall love Him with everything you've got.

His word should be on your hearts, parents. And then you speak that word to your children 24-7 wherever you go always teaching your children God's words.

The family is a learning community. And moms and dads you've been called to train your children to get them ready to get them used to God's word.

[14:45] And here's what's so sweet. God in His glorious sovereignty has placed each one of your children and grandchildren in your life.

He intends for you to train them. He wants to show His goodness to your children through you that they would follow Him and you would show them the way which means you've been sent.

God has sent you moms and dads to your learning communities to train your children to fear Him to love Him to learn to respond to His words.

Wise parents obey God's call. Do you know that you've been called? Are you aware of what God requires of you moms and dads? That this is His word.

So the question is have you been neglecting it? Have you been avoiding or minimizing this good responsibility entrusted to you?

[15:57] Do you need to take a humble U-turn in the way that you have been living and utilizing your time with your children? If you're married are you and your spouse on the same page?

Despite what others may say or model being a Christian parent is one of the greatest responsibilities and privileges of your entire life.

Your life. Your life. Wise parents obey God's call. The goal brothers and sisters is to be faithful to the Lord in our parenting.

Which brings me to the third way. Wise parents pray God's will. Now I can only imagine coming off that last point some of you are thinking I am such a loser of a parent and you become ashamed of yourself.

You think about all the ways you blew it. You think of yourself as a failure. failure. Or maybe you are just kind of like hearing this and you are hearing it for the first time and I am like I never knew that this is what God required of me.

[17:21] And now you feel overwhelmed. You feel like you are out of your league. And so you are starting to doubt yourself. I can't do that. Or maybe yet there is another group of parents in the room.

They are like yeah. Just give me the plan. I will rock this thing. And so it is not being ashamed of yourself.

It is not doubting yourself. It is like trusting in yourself. I can do this. Yeah. No big deal. Well you don't need to be ashamed nor do you need to doubt yourself nor should you trust yourself because Proverbs 3, 5, and 6 says what?

Trust in the Lord with all of your heart. Lean not on your own understanding and in all of your parenting ways acknowledge him and he will make straight your paths.

And the principal way in which we acknowledge God is by praying to him. And not just saying acknowledging God's existence yes Lord I know you're there but you're praying God's will.

[18:33] You're taking your cues from Jesus himself who taught us to pray. Our Father who is in heaven. Hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come.

Your will be done. On earth in my home as it is in heaven. You're praying God's will as you acknowledge him in your parenting ways.

Wise parents just to let you know wise parents are always desperately praying for their children.

That kind of desperation crazy praying that's normal for Christian parents.

It's normal for Christian grandparents. You're so burdened for your children and recognize that it's God alone that can change their hearts. You just cry out to him regularly.

Wise parents pray God's will. You know parenting is like firefighting. When your four-year-old melts down in front of you they are producing kind of this kind of heat.

[19:42] Or when your middle schooler and your high schooler are at odds again and it leads to tears and then doors are slammed and then there's this he says she says not that Jenny and I have experienced that in our home.

Same fight different day. These kind of meltdowns and sibling fights they generate this kind of heat and then you find out one of your children is looking at pornography on the side.

That's heat. And the mistake that we can make as parents is run from the fire when it actually is it's God giving you an opportunity brothers and sisters.

this is an opportunity to train before a firefighter runs into a burning building they make sure that their mask is affixed and that their oxygen tank is turned on and they go in for the rescue.

Prayer is the means by which we access God's life giving grace in times of heated situations.

[21:01] A wise parent is seeking the Lord when they encounter heat from their children and they prayerfully move towards the fire trusting God's going to provide the grace in the moment to rescue their children yet again.

when confronted with heated parenting opportunities we must be aligning ourselves with the will of our Father.

So let me ask you this. Are you in your parenting ways acknowledging Him? Are you looking to your God regularly when it comes to parenting your children or grandparenting your grandchildren?

Are you seeking Him? Are you prayerfully crying out to Him for help? Is there a specific reoccurring parenting opportunity?

It's a hot spot that regularly lights up again in your children. Maybe it's your four-year-old melting down, maybe it's your 16-year-old provoking your 10-year-old, start seeing that as an opportunity to

parent your children, to train them.

[22:28] Start praying towards that. God's will be done in your family on earth as it is in heaven. Wise parents pray God's will.

Moms and dads, are you praying? You must be faithful to God in your parenting. Four. Wise parents minister God's word.

Wise parents minister God's word constantly. Maybe you're like, I did not know I signed up to this for this.

God has deputized you, mom and dad. He has called you and authorized you to minister his word to each of your children.

If you would flip back to Deuteronomy chapter 6, 4 through 7. This is called the Shema. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

[23:32] That's verse 4. That's saying there's no other God but this God, Yahweh. Verse 5, how we respond, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

The response to the one and only God is to worship him with everything you got, moms and dads. And then in verse 6, we see, and these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. Before it can get to your kids, it needs to come through you. God's word on your heart, ready, governing, affecting.

And then verse 7, you shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise.

God's word is living and active. It penetrates separating bone from marrow. God's word, every word is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, correcting, reproof, and training in righteousness.

[24:46] We want to get these words into our children's hearts. And God has called us to do this 24-7 everywhere we go.

Speaking God's word in season and out of season, when it's convenient and when it's inconvenient. Here's what you need to understand. There is this phrase all throughout the book of Proverbs. It goes something like this. My son, listen. Hear my son. My son, do not forsake my words. Do not spurn your mother's instruction.

My son, hear me out. My son, don't go that way. My son, my son, over 40 times in the book of Proverbs, you have this repeated phrase of a dad calling his son to hear his words.

And in his father's words are God's words. We're seeing Deuteronomy 6, 4-7 played out all throughout the book of Proverbs.

[25:51] It's a call. Time and time again. This dad and this mom, both moms and dads, we see that in 1-8 and 6-20, both moms and dads are communicating God's word to their children.

Now, if you're a single mom or dad, don't fear. God's word is powerful. He can use you. He used Timothy's mom to raise him up with his grandma to become one who fears the Lord.

What we see modeled in the book of Proverbs is a parent regularly speaking God's words to his sons and children again and again and again.

1-8, 2-1, 3-1, 4-1 through 4, 4-20, 5-1, and on and on and on over 40 times. And in those 40 or so times, this father addresses the fear of the Lord, the contrast between wisdom and folly, who your companions are, he who is wise who walks with the wise, but a companion of fools will suffer harm, whether that is in the physical world or whether that's in the virtual world with social media.

Has anybody seen the social dilemma yet on Netflix? It doesn't address the biggest problem of sin in the human heart, but it does help us understand the extent and the manipulation of social media.

[27:30] We're going to watch it with our own children so that they understand what's at stake. So your companions matter. Self-control, sexual purity, speech, not envying sinners, hard work, ethic, stewardship of your resources.

What we see modeled in Proverbs is that moms and dads minister God's word. In our house, we have a third story room.

I call it the pastoral workshop. I write a lot of sermons up there. And so I'm usually up there Thursday, Friday, Saturday, writing a sermon. And I have this great view of our neighborhood.

Three nice big windows. I'm looking at our neighborhood and I always see the mail carrier making his or her way to every house. He's got this addressed parcel of words that he is going to bring to a specific house and he's going to drop that into the mail slot of the house. And at that point, it's up to the resident to do with the mail with what the mail needs to be done. Respond accordingly. Parents, we deliver the mail.

[28:54] We deliver the mail of God's word. Every day. Multiple times a day. We're bringing God's word addressed uniquely to each of our children because we know them.

children and we're going to bring it to each of our children and drop it into the mail slot of their heart and then we're going to trust that to them and the Lord.

They need to respond to that. We pray that they will. We pray that God would open their hearts but we're constantly delivering the mail of God's very words. So let me ask you a couple questions. When you hear that wise parents minister God's word, do you feel the weight and privilege of that? You should. You realize that God has called you to this. This is one of the greatest responsibilities and privileges of your life as a Christian. This is what it means to make disciples of Jesus of our children.

[29:59] children. Second question, are you actively taking God's word into your own heart? Are you coming before God in his word?

It's the Deuteronomy 6 part of the Shema. Is God's word functioning in your heart, governing your life, changing you from the inside out?

There is an integrity principle here, brothers and sisters. Be sure you're taking it in before you start dishing it out. Be a man or woman of integrity.

Are you seeing areas of your life, your children's life, that you need to deliver God's word to? Take it. Deliver the mail.

Trust God with it. Trust God that he can use his word to bring about a heart change in your child forever. There is a particular area that I want you to consider, moms and dads.

[31:13] There is an encroachment in our culture on Sunday mornings. It's children's sports. I'm all for sports. But Sunday morning when the church gathers to receive God's word and sing God's praises, that is a very important value to show our children, to instruct them.

So moms and dads, if you have not wrestled through this one yet, you need to. How to manage your family and your children's activities in sports on Sundays.

There's a way to trust God there. In our family, we made it a very clear rule that the Salvadis were not going to participate in group sports on Sunday mornings because as for me and my house, we're going to worship the Lord on Sunday mornings.

We're going to establish that as a norm. And there will be exceptions from time to time, but it's the norm. Because it's about values. If you're saying no to this, what are you saying?

There's much to consider here. But moms and dads, we are to minister God's word. We must be faithful to God in our parenting. Point five.

[32:32] Wise parents redeem God-given opportunities. You might be asking now, well, how do I do this? How do I train up my child in the way he or she should go?

How do I do this? What does that look like? Well, I want to give you an aid, an A-I-D to anticipate, to intervene, and to debrief as a parent.

You're chilled. But before we can talk about the parent aid, I just want to help you think about something else that doesn't get talked about, but we need to talk about it.

It's about the context the relationships with your children. Training our children to fear the Lord is best done, best done, in a context of love and trust.

If you look at Proverbs 23, 26, we read this. My son, give me your heart and let your eyes observe my ways.

[33:47] Do you know what that means? Give me your heart. Trust me, son. Give me your confidence.

It's trust. And in order for someone to see, observe your ways, you need to be close. Proximity. So, before we talk about the parent aid, we need to talk about relationships.

To invest in your children. To establish rhythms in your family's life. Reading the Bible. Eating meals together. Driving your children to school. These are all opportunities to build trust and proximity with your children.

So you can deliver the mail. To delight in them. To know them. Watching TV together. Reading at night together.

There's so many things that we can be doing to build our relationship. To establish this context of love and trust. Because we've got training to do, brothers, sisters.

[35:00] So let's talk about the parent aid. A good coach is going to not only just know his team. He's going to know the individual players on his team. He's going to know how individual players respond to different situations.

And so a good coach is going to anticipate how his player is going to respond to this particular situation and he's going to prepare him for it. And then before the game starts, he's going to anticipate and prepare.

And then during the game, he's going to intervene. Because when his quarterback starts flipping out, he's going to say, time out. Quarterback comes over. He's going to correct him on some things. And even might exercise some discipline.

Your bench buddy, all for that player's good. And then he puts him back in. He intervenes. And then after the game, they debrief.

Hey, what did we learn from this play? Hey, what did we learn from that? And it helps anticipate the next time around. Parents are coaches.

[36:03] We're coaching our kids, cheering them on, to fear the Lord, to walk in wisdom. And there are going to be some things that we need to anticipate with our children.

We need to help them think things through, understand consequences. What will happen if you step off the path of wisdom into folly?

Help them think that through. Right now, I'm helping my youngest daughter, Mary. Every day we go to school, I'm asking her. I'm building a relationship. I'm praying with her.

We're pulling up to K-Tech West. And I am asking her a series of questions. I'm trying to build into her a Christian worldview. Here's the four questions I ask her on a regular basis.

Mary, where do we come from? God. God created us. Mary, every human being in the K-Techs building is an image bearer of God. They're going to worship something.

[37:00] Second question. Mary, what's our biggest problem? Our biggest problem is our disobedience to God. It's sin. Mary, there's going to be people in the building saying our greatest problem is something else.

But that's not what God's word says. Mary, what is God's greatest solution to that problem? Jesus. on the cross. Mary, every person in that building needs Jesus.

Mary, what's the greatest hope we have? When Jesus comes back, Dad, he's going to make all wrongs right. In those four questions, I'm training my daughter to anticipate what she will encounter. Not just that day in K-Tech, but for the rest of our lives. us. How to view the world. But it also means we're preparing our children for pointed issues.

In Proverbs 5, 6, and 7, that wise dad prepares his son when he encounters an adulteress. He knows it's coming. He prepares him beforehand.

[38:10] Don't go that way, son. It's going to happen, and when it happens, you bolt. We need to be having conversations now. Right now, Jenny and I have conversations with our children about what marriage is between one man, one woman, together, for life.

We're framing things. We're getting ahead of conversations that will surely come. We're anticipating things, both on a larger scale and smaller scale.

And of course, there's going to be times when we need to intervene. When we call a timeout, when our four-year-old's melting down, when our teenagers are fighting again, we need to call a timeout, and sometimes we're going to have to discipline.

The book of Proverbs doesn't shy away from discipline. It doesn't shy away with the application of the rod. I'm not going to expand on that right now, but I do have some Proverbs I want to give you to look it up if that seems new to you.

Proverbs 22.6, 22.15, 23, 13 through 14, 29.15, 29.17. Wisdom uses discipline to train our children to get off the way of folly and back on the way of wisdom.

[39:37] There's a way to exercise discipline that is pleasing to God and loving of our children. There's a really helpful book. It's old now.

It's called *Shepherding a Child's Heart*. It's by Paul Tripp's brother, Ted Tripp. And in this book, there's a very helpful piece on the use of the rod. I would encourage you to look it up.

There's another very helpful book by Paul Tripp. It's called *Parenting*. It's his latest release on parenting. I would recommend it to parents and grandparents alike. If you're parenting a teenager, Paul David Tripp wrote this book, *Age of Opportunity*.

It's a little dated now, but it's very helpful. I would recommend them all to you. When you discipline your children, what you want to be sure you're doing is you're being clear in what the expectations are, clear in what the consequences will be, and then consistent in the application of it.

We intervene. We call timeouts. And when we intervene, it is always a gospel opportunity, moms and dads. When our children step off the path of blessing into folly, they sin.

[40:47] And we say that too, son, daughter. That's why Jesus died. That's why we need him to, why he shed his blood. For that. And we lead them in seeking God's forgiveness.

A-I-D, debrief. Later during the day, you circle back to stuff. Hey, have you thought further about that? Any further thoughts? How are you going to deal with it next time?

And so, our anticipating, our intervening, our debriefing, this is the way we do parenting. In the context of loving, trusting relationships.

So the question is, what is the opportunity right now? God is giving you to aid your children.

Can you identify it? Are you ready to bring the mail? Show the love? Train them up? We need to redeem God's, God-given opportunities.

[41:56] We need to be faithful to the Lord. The last piece, and I'll be quick. Wise parents trust in God's grace. Parenting is a long faithfulness in the same direction. You're going to be parenting your children through different seasons of their life.

It's hard work. There's head scratching confusion. There will be heartache. Your children will choose to do foolish things. You will do foolish things. You will make mistakes.

You will sin against your children. You're going to be needing God's grace over and over and over again. And our great God is lavish with his grace. He gives it to parents.

He gives it to children. He wants his grace permeating our lives because God wants your children to fear him more than you do.

And he's got the power to do that. Because of the challenging nature of parenting, we are in constant need of God's grace.

[43:02] Constant need of God's grace. So we're always calling out for it. And God's always given it. Every Christian has somewhere to turn in their parenting.

You're never without options. Every Christian parent needs to turn to Jesus to abide in him through prayer and obedience to his word.

We attach ourselves to Jesus every day. He's the vine. We are the branches. Apart from him, we can do no good parenting thing. But we also have each other.

We get to abide in Jesus together as we raise our children. We have this unique privilege as a church to follow Jesus together and to raise up the next generation together.

Parenting is hard. So we get to encourage one another when there's hardship. We get to share wisdom with one another when we're scratching our heads wondering what to do.

[44:15] We get to comfort one another when one of us learns our child has done something very foolish. And we get to rejoice with one another when God does a work.

And we say hallelujah. We've been praying for that. We're in this together, moms and dads, grandmas and grandpas. So not do we just seek Jesus.

We seek each other. Fear God first. Obey God's call. Pray God's will. Minister God's word. Redeem God's opportunities. Trust God's grace.

That's how we do it. That's how we make disciples of our children and fulfill the great commission in our homes. Pray with me. God in heaven, this is a lot of information.

And I pray now, God, for those who are feeling like they don't measure up, they're ashamed of themselves, or they feel overwhelmed, or their tendency is to trust in themselves.

[45:23] God, we ask that you would help us to trust you with all of our hearts. To lean not on our own understanding. In all of our ways, acknowledge you, and you will make straight our paths.

God, would you pour out your Holy Spirit in us and through us to affect heart change in our children that only you can do. God, raise up for yourself a generation to follow us who love you with everything they got.

In Jesus' name, amen.