

Unchanging Rules of Parenting

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[0 : 0 0] Our parents today would agree that we are parenting in a world that is very different from the world that our parents raised in. The parenting seminar that we hosted at the church this weekend focused on two of these major differences in the areas of human sexuality and in the area of information communication technology.

These are two very different parts of the world today that our parents didn't have to grapple with the way we have to grapple with today. I talked on the side of human sexuality and one of the things I pointed out is that in the world that we were raised in, human sexuality was fixed.

You were male or female and whether a person asked for your sex or your gender, it was the same thing, male or female.

But in the world that we are in today, we have those who are telling us that these things are not fixed, that sex may be fixed in terms of biology, but they say gender is not fixed.

The gender can be different from a person's biology. So a man who has the biology of a man today can say, I'm a woman trapped in a man's body.

[1 : 3 3] And there are many people and even governments that will entertain him and even facilitate him in trying to modify his body to be consistent with the way he thinks about himself or the way he sees himself.

Our parents didn't have to think about those kinds of things, but we certainly do. So Lincoln Hanlon, who's the other presenter for the seminar yesterday, he focused on information communication technology.

And he did a great job. He did some slides to show us how technology has moved. And he started with a rotary phone and moving straight up to today where we have the Internet and incredible devices that I was asking him about the power of technology.

And he was saying that the technology that just in a cell phone alone is more than the technology that sent the first man to the moon. And that's where things have come.

And one of the things I find interesting was he found a picture of, remember the big satellite dishes that people use to have in their yard, sometimes bigger than the house. And we never had one of those.

[2 : 5 0] Thanks to my mother. We just never did. We had to contend with Z and S. And in the summer, you could barely see Florida, South Florida channels.

I remembered we had a relative who visited from New Jersey and she came in the house and she saw us in front of the TV. She said, we are watching rain on TV.

I mean, we could see, but she couldn't see what we were watching. But that was the age that we grew up in. Our parents didn't have to worry too much for what we were going to be seeing on that TV.

But even for those of you who had the satellites that had all kinds of things beaming in, your parents could walk into the room, unplug the desktop box, and then you had no more information coming in.

But today, through a multiplicity of devices, our children can access whatever content is available out in the world via the Internet.

[3 : 51] And Lincoln Hanlon did a great job sharing with parents tools that they can use to manage and control the content that their children can access at home and through devices that they provide for them.

And we're going to have all that posted, the Lord willing, by Tuesday. If you weren't here to benefit from that seminar, we encourage you to take advantage of it. But here's the reality.

While there are some ways that our parents parented and the way we parent that are different, in many ways, parenting doesn't change.

Parenting, in many ways, and I would dare say in the most important ways, remains consistent over all generations. And what I mean is there are unchanging rules of parenting.

And all parents who will be faithful parents must follow those rules. Those rules have always been true. Those rules are true. Those rules will continue to be true.

[4 : 59] They are universal and they apply to all parents in all nations. Now, I know that there will be some people who will question some or all of the parenting rules.

That I have in mind. And they're free to do that. But as one who follows Christ, and for all of us who claim to follow Christ, I really believe that God's Word is our rule book for parenting.

That's where it starts for us. That is the foundation for those of us who put our trust in Christ. And it contains every single thing we need to know about parenting.

We are not left to ourselves. Scripture is sufficient in the area of parenting. And every book that is written on parenting is only good to the extent that is consistent with God's Word.

Every book on parenting is only worthwhile to the degree that it takes from God's Word and gives that back to us perhaps in some other form that we may be able to better wrap our minds around because it may tease out examples and show us what is actually being taught.

[6 : 11] But it is of no value if it contradicts what is in God's Word. I'll be looking this morning at several scriptures, but primarily I'm going to be looking at Deuteronomy 6, verses 1 through 9.

So if you've not yet turned there, please do so. And I want to read Deuteronomy 6, verses 1 through 9. I'm reading from the English Standard Version, so if you have another translation, you might as well read slightly differently.

Deuteronomy 6, beginning in verse 1 and concluding in verse 9. Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the rules, that the Lord your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over to possess, that you may fear the Lord your God, you and your son and your son's son, by keeping all his statutes and his commandments, which I command you all the days of your life, and that your days may be long.

Hear therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them, that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply greatly as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

[8 : 11] And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. 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.

You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Let's pray. Father, thank you this morning for your word. Lord, we thank you that you have not left us as your people to ourselves.

You have given us your word. And Lord, in particular, you have not left us as parents to ourselves. You have given us instructions about how we are to raise the children you have entrusted to us.

And so, Lord, we pray this morning that you would speak to our hearts, speak to our hearts afresh from your word. Help us to hear in the context of our families and in the context of our parenting for those of us who are parents.

[9 : 41] And Lord, we pray that you would glorify your name through the preaching of your word and as we seek to apply it in our lives.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. This past week, I was on one McCartney show and someone sent in a text question.

And the question went something like this. I was at Pastor Moss' church some years ago, a number of years ago, the person said, and he gave a rousing sermon on physical discipline, on how you should physically discipline your children.

Please ask him if he still believes that. And I was a bit surprised by the question. One McCartney asked me the question and I don't know for sure what the person had in mind, but I got the impression, certainly from how we read the question, but you can't tell how the person would have had a tone in the question, but I kind of got the impression that the person thought that I had changed my views on physical discipline.

And I gather that's why they probably asked. And my response was, absolutely not. I've not changed my position. I still believe it. And the reason I believe it and the reason I stated for the person is that what is true doesn't change.

[11 : 06] It doesn't matter how much time elapses. It doesn't matter how many others may change. If something is true, it doesn't change. Two plus two will be four and they'll never change.

And so rules simply do not change because time elapses. Now, there are many unchanging rules about parenting.

And I won't even attempt to try to begin to address them all. So bearing that in mind, here's what I'm going to do this morning. For the remainder of our time, I'm going to consider what I consider three of the most important unchanging rules in parenting.

If I try to think about it, it's almost as if I was sitting in an airport and there was a young parent who was going to board a flight in about 30 minutes and I had the opportunity to talk to these parents about what I thought were unchanging rules of parenting.

I would share these three rules. And here they are. Number one, parents must instruct.

[12 : 23] Number two, parents must discipline. And number three, parents must model. I believe these are three foundational, unchanging rules of parent and that you cannot be a faithful parent without doing these three things for your children.

Instructing them, disciplining them, and modeling for them how life is to be lived. So let's consider the first one.

Parents must instruct. How many of you are glad that our children didn't come into the world as big as they are now?

I mean, I'm thinking of my own children. I couldn't imagine parenting if they showed up with ideas and convictions and views and opinions and all that in parenting would be a nightmare.

But by the grace of God, he gives us these helpless little infants. He gives us these little babies. They're not blank tablets. They do have some things coded in them when they come, but for the most part, they are blank tablets.

[13 : 38] And they're like sponges and they are absorbing all the things they hear and all the things that they see. And it is by God's design that parents are their primary teachers.

Parents are to instruct their children. And the foundation for all instruction is to teach our children first and foremost about the one who gave them to us.

God. God is the one who gives us children. God is the one who entrusts children to parents. And so first and foremost, the duty of parents is to instruct children about God and what he commands.

Now, the background to this passage that we just read in Deuteronomy 6 is that Israel had just been redeemed out of Egypt. They had wandered around the desert for some 40 years.

And God did that so that the unfaithful generation would die out. And here in Deuteronomy 6, they're standing on the doorstep of the promised land.

[14 : 46] And Moses is preparing them to enter into the land and live in the land. And so what he does is he rehearses for them, he recites for them the laws of God so they can refresh their memories about it.

And they can be reminded how God calls them to live. in this gift of land that he is giving to them as he constitutes them as a nation.

And so what we see in these verses before us is that the Lord, through Moses, is speaking to the entire nation. And he tells them in verses 5 and 6 that they're to love the Lord their God with all their heart and soul and might.

And that the words that he commands them are to be on their hearts. And then notice what he commands them concerning their children in verses 7 through 9.

Let's read that again. He says to them, 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 up.

[15 : 53] You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontlets! between your eyes! You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates!

Notice that they are to teach what God commands to their children and they are to teach it diligently. When you read these verses, verses 7 through 9, immediately what should come out of your mind is this.

This takes time. time. This takes time. It takes time to instruct our children in this way. And not only does it take time at the moment, it takes time over time.

Because this is an endeavor to which we are called. And one of the things I think will help us as parents is to realize that parenting is a long calling, if not a lifelong calling.

And so it takes time. the other thing that we should be able to see from reading these verses is that this call to teach our children, to instruct our children, is not in a vacuum.

[17 : 09] And it's not just rote data. It's not just telling them, memorize these commandments, although memorization is certainly a part of it. Teaching our children about God is to teach them about God as we go through life.

And that's the picture that Moses is painting for the children of Israel. We have to teach them when we're at home, when we're sitting around. We have to teach them when we're out and about, when you walk in the way.

We have to teach them, he says, when they're laying down, when they're rising up. And the point is not so much specifically teach them in that moment. teach them all day. Teach them every opportunity that you have.

And what this means is we have to be taking in life with our children and teaching them about God as we live life. So things happen with our neighbors.

What they do or don't do, we can use it as an opportunity to teach our children from God's perspective. You may read something in the news. You can tailor that to teach your children about God in light of what you have read.

[18 : 28] Whatever. I mean, the opportunities abound for us to teach our children about God and we should embrace them. But here's the point.

The point that Moses communicates to us is clear. The duty to instruct our children about God and what he requires is a daily ongoing task.

And parents don't want us to hear this this morning because I know that we live in a busy time and in a very distracted time and oftentimes we're not engaging with our children, instructing them as we should.

And sometimes we think that when a child gets 12, 13, that pretty much the child could go on remote control and make some decisions for him or herself.

But teaching and instructing our children about God is really the most important duty of parenting. It's our duty. Thank God for churches.

[19 : 35] Thank God for Sunday schools. Thank God for children's church. But that is to be supplemental to our responsibility to instruct our children and to teach them about God.

and what he requires and what he commands. And I really believe that this is where it begins for us as parents.

If you're going to be convinced that this is your duty, it really starts here. It starts here by recognizing it is not the church's responsibility to teach our children.

Yes, churches come alongside and they are supporting us in that, but we must be convinced and convicted in our hearts. This is my primary responsibility as a parent.

father. And I would dare say this morning, because it is true, fathers must lead the way.

[20 : 43] Fathers must lead the way. And properly read these verses that we just looked at, though Moses had in view the entire nation, it is very clear from what he says that he primarily had fathers in view.

We see that from verse two, when he says that you may fear the Lord your God, you and your son and your son's son. Fathers are primarily tasked with this responsibility to teach their children about God and what God requires.

Mothers have responsibility also, but in a secondary way. And certainly if you're a single mother, well, then you are that primary person to be doing this.

But here's the biggest challenge that we are facing in the church today. I think the biggest challenge we are facing in the church today in terms of parenting is even among parents who profess to know Christ.

There's great biblical illiteracy. We live at a time where Bibles abound. in printed form, in digital form, you can access them in multiple translations and languages.

[22 : 06] And yet, biblical illiteracy is at an all-time high. More people are being deceived today than in our parents' generation when they had less Bibles and they had less education.

education. But most of the education, much of the education was centered on and around God's Word. But this illiteracy abounds today among believers concerning God's Word is because many parents themselves don't take the time to read God's Word and to study God's Word on their own.

And therefore, parents are unable to teach their children about God and about His Word and about life in light of His Word. Many parents are failing to instruct their children with sound instruction that they need about God and they need about life.

Because jobs and caring for our families can be very time-consuming. Yet, entertainment is at an all-time high.

the amount of time spent on it, the amount of money spent on it, and all the distractions, the gadgets that we acquire over time and we invest in.

[23 : 32] We find time for those things, but we find little time to get in God's Word, not just for ourselves, but for this important duty of teaching our children, instructing them about God and what God requires.

I want to say to you this morning, parents, that we make a lot of sacrifices to educate our children and I am all for that. My parents, they valued education and they sacrificed for us to be educated and we learned that from them and we sought to do the same for our own children.

And we should do that as best we can. but an education in academics is nothing compared to this education that we need to give our children about God and about what he requires.

The academic stuff will end when this life ends. The academic stuff has no benefit for the life to come. And therefore our priority ought to be I will give myself, I will spend myself, in equipping myself, preparing myself to teach my children about God and what God requires.

And so we must do this as parents. We must not allow this important priority to fall by the wayside and to be sucked up in terms of the time by all manner of distractions that we have in this world.

[25 : 15] Now if you're ready for instructing your children, that's great. But if you're not doing that, let me suggest a few ways you can get started in instructing your children.

And again, fathers, you need to lead the way. by the grace of God, I encourage you to do, this is the first thing you need to do if you're going to teach your children.

Do what God's word says in verses 5 and 6. Look at verses 5 and 6 again. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and all your might.

And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. This is the starting point for teaching our children. The starting point for teaching our children is we are to love God with all of our hearts.

We are to let his word be on our own hearts. We are to be aware of the things that compete with the affections of our hearts. Because it is only when we are loving God as we should, we are doing what he calls us to do, that we are in a position to teach our children to do what God calls them to do.

[26 : 40] So it begins with us. And the truth is that when we think of loving God with all of our hearts, and no one does this perfectly, none of us does it perfectly.

There is only one who loved God, the Father, perfectly. And that is God the Son when he walked on this earth.

All the rest of us, we do it, but not perfectly. We have to be aware that the same heart that we can love God with, we love idols with.

And idols are not necessarily statues that we build and we bow down to. Some of the common idols of our day are jobs and businesses, money and possessions, things that possess us more than we possess them, some of the idols are the tools that we buy, the gadgets, the information technology devices that we have.

All of these can compete for the affections of our hearts. things. And so, here are four quick things that you can do after you have made that commitment to love God with your whole heart and seek to serve him.

[28 : 03] I encourage you to do these four things. Number one, I encourage you to build daily personal devotions, which will include reading God's word and then selecting something from which you've read by which you can instruct your children.

You can have a conversation with your children. You can talk with your children. Now, depending on the age of the children, this may not be every day that you come up with something because it may be that something that you come up with today may be sufficient to tease out over several days.

But as your kids are getting older, maybe it'll be every day or every other day that you find something that you introduce in conversation as you sit in the house, as you are on the way, driving in the car, living life, you can bring to bear, you can help them to see this is what it means to love God, this is what it means to do what he requires of us.

Second, I encourage you to build in a time of regular family devotions where you can read God's word and pray and give instruction to your children.

If you're not doing that, I encourage you to do it. And certainly if you have older children, you have to certainly work through a lot of the logistics of what that would look like.

[29 : 20] It may not be something you're able to do every single day, but at least carve it out. Think about your schedule. When do you have some open-ended time that you can begin to sit with your children, with your family, and you can begin to open God's word, and you can begin to teach them.

This is what God requires of us. Number three, I encourage you to have family meals together. You know, we live in a time where people are just increasingly busy, and it's so easy to not try to mesh our schedules, and then even when we're together, sometimes people grab food, and they go and scatter in different directions.

Fathers, that, and mothers, that can be a wonderful opportunity to bring the family together and have intentional conversation about something that you read in your devotions, or about something that took place in family devotions.

You can instruct your children and your family in that way. And then number four, very practical, manage the distractions at home. Manage the television.

Manage the smart devices. These eat away precious time that can be used for instruction. You know, one of the rules I'd encourage, you know, sometimes we have our devices on and in use at all times.

[30 : 44] You know, you're at the dinner table, put them away. Sometimes just have a conversation, put them away. And again, parents, we need to lead the way. One of the things that Lincoln Hanlon shared, it was just so wise, he was saying that parents can model how we should use technology for their children.

And so, for example, if you're a parent and you're always on your phone, always on your phone, your phone is like an extension of your air, your children are going to pretty much think, oh, that's what you do.

But if they can see you putting that device down at times and they can see that device doesn't have you, well, then you can model for them a healthy way in using devices. The second unchanging rule of parenting that I want to commend to you this morning is this.

Parents must discipline. Parents must discipline. And by discipline, I mean physical discipline when a child does something wrong.

Now, I'm pretty sure that on the first point, parents must instruct. I doubt there's anyone who disagrees with that. But on this point, I wouldn't be surprised if there are some who disagree that we should physically discipline our children.

[32 : 04] I'm not saying that is the case, but if somebody said, I don't believe in that, it wouldn't surprise me because that is the trend of the world. That is the way that the world seems to be going.

And some who profess Christ, and they are true Christians, they are also embracing that view as well. They're using timeouts and all sorts of other things instead of physical discipline.

Listen to these three scriptures from the book of Proverbs on disciplining children. Proverbs 13, 24, whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.

Yet there are some people who say, oh, I don't smite my child, I don't discipline my child because I love my child. But scripture says, no, you don't love them, you hate them. When you discipline them, you demonstrate that you love them.

And this is why it is always good at the end of disciplining a child to remind the child, I do this because I love you. How many of you have heard that? I do this because I love you.

[33 : 23] So I do get smiling on the front room. He's heard that a lot. And I meant it and still mean it. I'm not sure he's old enough to thank me for it.

Now, see, I'm old enough to thank my mother for all the discipline that she gave me. You know, in our house, my father used to do all the beating, just about 90%.

When my mother beat you, oh, you did something really, really bad. And I remember a few occasions where I got double beating from her and then when my father came home at night, 9 o'clock, when the food store closed, I got beaten again.

I remember there were times my mother beat me in the morning, you know, for something. And it would kind of wear off and I'd be having fun and I remember, I'm getting beaten tonight. all the fun goes because you realize, boy, I'm beating waiting for you.

And you just couldn't have fun. I thank God for that. I thank God that my parents did not spare the rod. Proverbs 22, 15,!

[34 : 26] Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, for the rod of discipline drives it far from him. Brothers and sisters, this is true about every child. the child can be as cute as ever.

But this is true. Folly is not just in this bound up in there. And it is only the rod of discipline that drives it far from him. So we have to give our children driving lessons very early and help them to have that stuff removed from their hearts.

From the time that they can understand right from wrong, they can understand driving lessons. Proverbs 23, 13 through 14. Do not withhold discipline from a child.

If you strike him with the rod, he will not die. You know, before I read this, I said to my father, oh, you're going to kill me, you're going to kill me. He didn't listen to me and I didn't die.

I'm right here. If you strike him with the rod, you will save his soul from shield. pastor and theologian, Dr.

[35 : 39] Joel Beeky, wrote a helpful book on parenting titled, Parenting by God's Promises. And in this book, here's what he says about physical discipline, which he calls spanking.

He writes, We must be careful not to fall into the following errors. The first is the error of love without correction.

A parent says, I love my children so much I can't spank them. The Bible says we do not love our children if we do not spank them or correct them.

Proverbs 13 and 24. Children need correction and without it, they are not likely to put any great value on our love.

The second problem is a rod of correction without love. We spank out of anger, whether piping hot or icy cold, and our children feel nothing but physical pain and the equal bitter sting of our wrath.

[36 : 47] They see that we are not really grieved when we spank them, and they do not feel we are doing it in God's name. They know we are punishing them because we are angry.

Proverbs 15 and 18 says, A wrathful man stirs up strife, but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.

Angry discipline is counterproductive! As a means of training our children in godliness. Dr. Beeky's point is that we have to administer discipline to our children in god's name and not our own.

We have therefore called as parents to seek to demonstrate god's character to our children when we administer discipline. Again, the truth is none of us who are parents have done this perfectly.

perfectly. I certainly have not. In my own parenting, I've administered discipline in my own name and not in God's name.

[37 : 57] But here's what I would say. I believe that discipline, badly administered, is better than none at all. It's better than none at all.

And let me just quickly add to that that as much as I hold to physical discipline, as much as Scripture supports physical discipline, Scripture does not support child abuse.

It does not support physically abusing our children. It does not support using whatever comes to our hand, the broomstick, the shoe, the mop, whatever, and beating our children with it.

Scripture does not support that. What Scripture supports is Scripture supports the use of a rod, of an instrument of discipline, an instrument that children would recognize as associating with discipline only, not the belt.

The belt is to put around the waist. I remember a number of years ago, on a Sunday, we were all by my mother's house, and a lot of the grandchildren were there, and they were jumping up on a coffee table, including Cedric.

[39 : 09] He was there jumping up on the coffee table. And so, one of the, somebody said, get the belt, get the belt. And when they said, get the belt, the others jumped off the table, and they brought the belt in, and Cedric is still jumping up on the table.

And my mother was doing like this, and he's looking at me, what are you doing with that belt? And then my sister Rose said, get the paddle. And eventually said that he darted off the table, because he knew the paddle meant discipline.

And what we did, we packed it with their bottle. They had a bag. That was packed in the bag, and it went for them. That was part of the parenting equipment.

And, and so, we did that. But, but abusing our children, causing welts to come on them, and causing physical damage to come to their bodies, that is wrong.

That is abuse. And that should never, ever happen. Because again, we do this in God's name. The reason we discipline our children, we should discipline our children, because they've done something wrong, and not wrong by us, but wrong by God.

[40 : 21] And so, we do it in God's name. Physical discipline, properly administered, is a gift. It is a gift to children.

And I say this sincerely this morning, as one who has given time for most of his life, studying God's word, and accepting it to be the word of God, and as one who has been the beneficiary, of physical discipline.

I shudder to think, where I would have gone, where my life would have ended up, if my parents allowed me to go my own way, and they did not physically discipline me.

And so, I think you should go without saying this morning, that failing a test, not doing well in school, not winning a race, there's not reasons to discipline a child.

Not even verbal discipline, much less physical discipline. To summarize, let me just say, about seven things about physical discipline.

[41 : 22] This is going to be quick, I'll run through them real fast. Again, number one, we administer discipline, as parents, on God's behalf, and in God's name.

We are to punish what God says is wrong. We are to explain to the child, what he or she has done wrong, and why it is wrong. This takes time.

This also helps us as parents, if you're doing this, that if you are angry, in and of yourself, that as you begin to explain, you take the time to do that, hopefully your anger should begin to dissipate.

Here's a good rule of thumb. If you cannot identify the sin, and show the child, what she has done is wrong from God's word, it's a good sign that you should not be physically disciplining.

If you can't show them, here's what God's word says, and this is why, daddy, this is why money has to discipline you, because God says you shouldn't do this, and you have to be disciplined for it.

[42 : 38] Number two, we shouldn't discipline when we're angry, and I think Dr. Beeky gets it right, when he says that our anger can be piping hot, or icy cold.

And I think we all know where we stand. We know where, whether we would be the one who would be disciplining, with the piping hot anger, or the icy cold anger.

But our children are able to detect both of them. Again, physical discipline should be administered, with an appropriate instrument, used exclusively for that purpose. And parents, those of you, you know, with young children, and by the way, let me just add this part, more of a legal part.

You know when our children turn 16, it is against the law to physically discipline them. So no matter how much you feel like you want to do that, you don't want to do that.

So, word of advice to parents, when you see a child approaching 16, you may want to give them an investment before. I tease my kids with that.

[43 : 47] Tell them, you know, this is what the law says, but be aware of this. So, that's one of the realities. But more than that, though, here's what I would say. If you are going to wait for the latter years to be physically disciplining, you're probably not doing a good job on the front end of it.

We shouldn't be letting the Lord tell us no more physical discipline. Physical discipline is to be weaning away over time.

So, there should be less physical discipline over time as a child is being raised and instructed in the way that he or she should go. And then number four, we should discipline as soon as possible, but not in a rush.

We should take time to teach. Again, physical discipline. Number five, physical discipline that harms a child is physical abuse. Number six, we should show love to our children, remind them of our love when we discipline them, at the beginning and at the end.

And then, number seven, something I said before, it is the responsibility of both parents to discipline, but primarily the responsibility of fathers. And this is why it says in Ephesians 6, 4, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

[45 : 11] This is primarily to fathers. And mothers, be aware that your natural tendency is more to nurture your children than to discipline them.

and sometimes mothers can nurture their children in what is wrong and what is sinful, not because they intentionally do it, but that's just their nature.

And mothers should realize that discipline is not a natural thing for them to do. Discipline is more natural for fathers to do, and so the Bible warns fathers against it because we can be overzealous and we can actually discipline in such a way that we provoke our children to anger.

We provoke them to wrath, or as one translation says, we cause them to be discouraged. So we want to be aware of that. Or third, and finally, and quickly, parents must model.

Parents must model. And by this, I mean that parents themselves are to practice what they preach. It is not do as I say and not as I do.

[46 : 20] And this is why the Lord begins in Deuteronomy 6 with the parents. He begins with them. He says, you are to love the Lord your God with all your heart. You are to keep these commandments.

You are to ensure that you are abiding by these commandments as you live life. Binding them on your hands, putting them to your front list, writing them on the doorpost that you will keep them before you.

We're called to model for our children what we are instructing them and raising them to do. We are instructing and raising them primarily to love God and know what He requires of us and do what He requires of us.

We are to model that for our children. But parents, the reality is this. Whether intentionally or unintentionally, whatever we do or don't do, we are modeling for our children.

Our children do see our lives. Our lives are on open display for our children to see more than the world can see. They watch how we serve Christ.

[47 : 28] They watch our priorities. They watch how on a day like today what our priorities would be coming to the house of God.

How we come to the house of God. the diligence with which we pursue it. They watch how we serve Christ. Husbands, they watch how you love or do not love and care for their mother.

And wives, they watch how you submit or do not submit to their father. They watch how you handle money and what you value.

Our children watch us. And we are modeling for them intentionally or unintentionally how they are to live life.

Almost every morning if you listen to the news you'll almost always hear commercials from insurance companies. You read the newspapers you will see it.

[48 : 40] And they're encouraging us to take our life insurance to care for our children to leave them an inheritance. And to the best of our abilities we should. A lot of parents today are hearing a lot about leaving a legacy for their children.

Leave a lasting legacy for your children. to know that no amount of money no amount of material possessions that we leave for our children is truly a lasting legacy necessarily because money can be squandered overnight.

Assets can be wasted overnight. there's no certainty about what's going to happen with those things. But there is a lasting legacy that we can leave for our children.

We can leave a lasting legacy for our children a model of what it looks like to love God and to serve God in this world.

we can leave a legacy that will live in the hearts of our children and even our grandchildren and perhaps even our great grandchildren.

[50 : 09] That my father my grandfather my great grandfather was a man was a woman who loved the Lord who practiced what he or she preached I couldn't help but think of my parents my father in particular who is gone as I prepared this sermon and the true lasting legacy that he left for me and my siblings.

I thought about how my parents modeled what it was to serve God and by the grace of God they were fortunate that when we were born they were serving Christ and so for all of our days we grew up knowing nothing other than parents who were truly serving the Lord.

It is almost impossible for me to walk into my mother's bedroom and not remember times as a family kneeling around that bed and praying every day except except maybe on weekends and I could remember even when I wasn't praying could hear my parents crying out and calling out to God for mercy and grace for us and for our family and I watched them live life I watched them make decisions I watched them work through conflicts in the home and outside with neighbors and that's a legacy that you just can't put a price on and the reality is I don't think that they were overly conscious I am modeling for my children as I do these things but they were and we are and see this is one of the reasons why for us as a church

I want us to take very seriously those of us who have children at home I want us to take very seriously this responsibility to let the great commission start with our children that we will take the time to instruct them and raise them in the way that they should go because if we do that right if we model that for them they're going to do it for their children as well and the Lord should tarry over and over and over the generations we will have parents who are committed to modeling what it means to love God and to do what he calls us to do but before I take some questions let's pray Father thank you for not leaving us to ourselves as parents thank you for calling us to first of all love you with all of our hearts and our souls and our might and that we are to diligently keep your commandments and then we are to teach and model the same for our children but I pray that you would work in the heart of every parent in this room myself included and help us to recommit to the task of being parents according to the rules that you've laid out in your word and in particular

Lord may we commit to instructing them and disciplining them and being a godly model and example before them and that we would do this for the honor and glory of your great name that we will do it as a testimony to the one who sent his son to die on the cross to bear our sin and the judgment we deserved so that we can be forgiven so that we can know peace with God and so that we can truly love you with all of our hearts and soul and light work in our hearts today we pray in Jesus name amen amen any questions this morning we have ample time it's only 1135 any questions pertaining to the sermon this morning or if you were here at the seminar any questions pertaining to that as well do you have a question okay thank you

[55 : 18] Ronald my question is in a family where children let's say two kids and the parents did all of that they instructed they disciplined they modeled and one of the child is clearly we would and going south what would you advise such a parent to do and what could be the problem is it that this child is destined to be wayward or is it that the parents aren't doing enough it's a very good question and it was something that crossed my mind as I prepared I just decided to leave it out altogether so I'm glad that you asked that that is a reminder to us that we live in a fallen world and perhaps the best example that we have in scripture is the example of

Adam and Eve and their two sons one was a worshiper of God the other was a murderer and so I do not believe that faithfully modeling before our children what it means to love God and what it means to serve God will guarantee that all of our children will fall in follow in our footsteps and they will do the same scripture doesn't guarantee that and I certainly I'm not seeking to go beyond scripture that is a hard and painful reality but it is a reality and so to that parent I would point that parent to the first parents Adam and Eve who had two sons and who went in two different directions and really just to remind them that serving the Lord as we should is no guarantee that our children will necessarily follow in our footsteps

I do think that we can see a general rule for example in the book of Proverbs it tells us that when we train a child in the way he should go he won't depart from it that's not a law the book of Proverbs is not a law book it is a wisdom book it is a book of principles and so I think we would all agree that the general principle is that is true that as we live life our children will model what we live but it is no guarantee that every single one of them would be that parent I would just encourage them to continue to pray for that child because the truth is I don't think it is biblical right or wise because the child is being wayward to say oh you were just destined to go wayward I wouldn't do that at all because every single one of us until our dying day our last breath things can turn for us the thief on the cross it was moments before he died that he was able to see the savior and to turn from sin and ask the lord to let him be with him in paradise so I would encourage parents who are in that situation to continue to pray continue to trust the lord and to believe that what you see now is not necessarily permanent is that helpful good anyone else that was a very good question I really appreciate that because

I'd hate for anyone to walk out here thinking that if you as a parent model for your children and somehow one or more of them or all of them don't follow your footsteps that the first reflex is what have I done wrong and listen truth is you should never think like that because we have done things wrong we have done things wrong and if you have multiple children and some are serving the lord thank god that despite us not doing everything perfectly some are serving the lord so if you require perfect parenting for our kids to serve the lord none of them will serve the lord you be sure of that anybody else demetria good morning in the case of children that are not minors that still live at home how much of this parenting principle I mean is still supposed to be in effect how much of it do you let them kind of they're adults and so they have a lot of their own decisions that they're supposed to be making where do you draw the line in terms of you are an adult and you have your own decisions to make spiritually you still live in my house though and they're still do we still do we still impose what is our own beliefs on them or do we kind of just allow them to make their decisions give me an example of what you're thinking about would be an imposition something simple I suppose would be person okay persons visiting the house maybe not really visiting the house let's just say daily devotions is daily devotion something that my adult children living at home should still be required to do with me even if they say they don't believe as

I do but they live in the house but they're adults now and they don't want to do daily devotion yeah now that would be unwise that would be unwise to require that to say you must come to daily devotions I would have them I would leave that invitation open to them and allow them to come to that I wouldn't I mean I think that would be going to an extreme and really you would be forcing that child in a ongoing way to just do something because you want them to do it but not necessarily seeking to really benefit them so that would not be something I would do now I would certainly require that with a minor child I wouldn't let a minor child have his own way that way but I wanted to ask because I wasn't sure what you were thinking about here's what I would say though I think that there are some wise house rules that we should all have and so if you're in the house it doesn't matter what your age is there's some house rules that you should abide by and I think rules should be reasonable and I think if for example parents are living by those rules then it would seem to be reasonable that those rules are enforced and when children find the rules to be unreasonable that's a good time for them to consider turning their own key when when not to be crass but I won't say that it'll probably be crass I wouldn't say that I was going to say what my parents used to say when you felt that some of you probably know what they used to say anyone else is that helpful

[62 : 53] Demetria is okay yeah and let me just say this as well I'm not sure that there are some hard and fast rules that we can apply to every single situation we know our homes we know our children and we should be wise parents should be wise parents a lot of parenting is more of an art especially in the later years and a science any other questions no oh run over here my husband is terrified of the question I'm going to I don't even know what you're going to ask you won't know my phone what scenario in terms of an adult child they come to church with you they are an adult now but what I get from my church they're not getting so now they want to find another church to go to how how would that be dealt with they're still at home in my house yeah but yeah I mean I think the impulse would be

I think a wise thing perhaps would be to help them to think through what that would look like and so you may want to help them to evaluate what are some of the issues what what are the concerns I try to walk them through that decision I mean it's the first thing I would I would do again I don't think it is something that you necessarily would want to mandate unless there may be other considerations involved there but I would I would certainly not just say okay well go ahead and do that I would try to help them to think through okay what what what are the what are the considerations for this in terms of what are you looking for what do you think is is absent where are you thinking to go that you will find that and really just try to help them to think through it because sometimes it may not be something that they fully understand that they are looking for and they're trying to achieve themselves so I think it certainly merits a conversation having that conversation with the child and trying to think through what it is they are they're looking for um that's the best I can offer on that my question would be very similar along that line what if um that adult child doctrinally does not believe but they've been raised to believe they believe something else and they want to go to another church and be the same thing you have that conversation but I would say that one is that one is pretty clearer if for example that child is a believer and says I don't believe what that church believes well then certainly you'd be binding a person's conscience to try to hold them to that

I think you should let them go um to another church that is consistent with the conscience that they hold and that's different it's similar but it's different from what um Keisha was talking about I think that's more of uh a big I I don't feel I'm getting whatever and I want to go and try to find whatever somewhere else so that one is less specific this one is very specific so my assumption would be that this is a child who is a believer that says I don't believe what this church now teaches I don't think any parent should seek to bind the conscience of a child to stay in a church that they just don't hold the doctrines of that church one last question we're talking about parenting with kids that are our children that minors are what or older children how what would you say what would you say would be the responsibility of the church in coming alongside parents who the children may attend the church I mean for what I mean they they end up coming to church the parents don't come come to church there are limited opportunities within that child's home for what you've talked about today just by virtue of the fact that the parents themselves are not believers and generally don't come to church um what would what how do you propose that we as a church and I'm speaking you know as a local church not not the catholic church how do we help come alongside and provide the same kind of support for such children

I thought you were going to ask for the parents since this was really directed to right but I mean the parents don't yeah I'm not sure I mean for example physical discipline I'm not sure that we can do anything as relates to that child in that particular area but what I thought you were perhaps getting at is how we might try to reach those parents who don't attend church to seek to bring influence in their lives that the child may benefit from these things that we're talking about I don't know that there's a way to cause the child to benefit away from involving the parents because truth is those children are the parents responsibility and we aren't able to usurp that so so your plan would be to reach out to the parents of those I think I think that is the only legitimate way to really get the children to benefit because those children are still under the instruction of or the authority of their parents yeah I don't see now if you're thinking about something in particular maybe you can throw it out in terms of what you're thinking as some way that you may be able to minus the parent bring these things to be in the life of the child I am not seeing how that would be possible right now

I'll talk to you okay all right we have time for one more if there are no more we'll sing our closing song any other questions before we wrap up okay has one okay so fail be the last one I don't have so much a question as a comment I just wanted to comment on the question that Demetrio raised I think based on the sermon there are two areas that we can clearly assist those kinds of children one is the instruction we can certainly assist with instructing and you know to whatever extent that we can and modeling now the area of discipline becomes very touchy so that you know we would want to shy away from in certain ways I mean still there are ways that we can also discipline in ways that aren't harmful but we need to do it within the context of the law and within the context of wisdom so I just wanted to add that it was good I was understanding Demetrio to be asking what can we do beyond what we are doing because we certainly are instructing them in children's church we certainly as we live our lives are modeling but you do raise another point that we perhaps can be a bit more intentional with those children beyond what we ordinarily do for all the children including those who are getting that at home that we can perhaps focus more on those children and so I think that's a very good observation in terms of the physical discipline part you know in the ministry of education school system they are moving to get rid of physical discipline I think it's a bad decision I think that what they should do is ensure that not every single staff member can discipline but those who may be a principal and somebody else and in the presence of one or two others they administer discipline as opposed to in a room by yourself so I think it's a bad move that they're making what's that I've heard of some situations where some other teachers are beating kids yeah okay but I think they're planning on even getting rid of that right yeah they're planning getting rid of that and as it relates to us physically disciplining children I would caution you against that I would I would caution you against disciplining children in this congregation physically who are not your children unless you have the express permission of that parent to do that and you may even want to get that in writing as opposed to anything else all right let's stand and let's sing our closing song and this song is really to help us to ask the Lord to be our vision to help us to see as we should see based on how he thought it lies

[73 : 26] Yes Yes Thank you.