

Paul's Parenting Part 2

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[0 : 0 0] I think any time when we can really wrap our heads around God's grace and His mercy for us, it is a great and wonderful thing because we can focus far more on who we are and become self-defeated, especially with our own failures, when confronted with our own sin.

As many of you know, the Christian life is not living a life of perfection and purity. It is meant to do things under the power of God as He has confronted our sin.

He has provided the remedy, which is the cross, which defeats our arrogance, our pride, our foolishness, and our brokenness.

And I think it's very important for us to be mindful of that as we come into today's text of Ephesians 6 verses 1 to 4.

Ephesians 6, 1 to 4. If you've been away or just joining us for the very first time, we're kind of at the tail end of a series called Family Matters. And last week, we opened up the whole issue of parenting, Christian parenting.

[1 : 2 0] What does God call us to be as parents? And what does God call us as children, those who are born of parents, and how to respond, obey, and honor our parents?

As I stated last week, parenting is no easy task. In fact, many people I know say it is the most difficult thing that they have ever done in their lives.

To think that God in His sovereign mercy bestows us broken people as we have children, that we are to shepherd these young souls to be not only knowledgeable about Jesus, but to be intimately acquainted with their own heart and God's mercy love that He has for them as well.

It is a humbling task. As I stated, for some people that I know their parenting, their family has been the source of their greatest joy, and others it has been the source of their greatest sorrow.

It's tough. Sometimes it's even tougher because of our own family backgrounds. If we weren't raised with godly examples, it seems like there's even more to learn, more to understand, more to overcome.

[3 : 0 6] But just as we were just singing this last song, God's mercy is more. One of the things that I've seen in parents is that sometimes they can get exasperated.

I'm not good enough. I just don't have the background, the understanding, the patience. But there is a spiritual component to parenting, and I really need you to take that to heart.

That God is with you, whatever He has called you to. So if He has called you to the blessing of being a parent, He will equip you.

He will empower you. And the reason we have this Bible is that God is giving us His wisdom that we can use to be equipped to understand what God calls us to.

One of the things that I wanted to touch on is that we see in this passage that there's two people being addressed.

[4 : 1 1] We have children and we have parents. And last week, we talked about the children's responsibility. The children's, the child, and the children, we understood, is anybody from birth to her still living in the home.

That there is a call, a command by God for you to both obey your parents and honor them. And that just means just not honoring them with actions, but honoring them with an attitude as well.

So for those parents, it's kind of lets you off the hook. If you have been godly and done what God has called you to do in the home and somehow your children have disobeyed and chosen a different path, they've rejected Jesus, it's not all on you.

We are all, we all have agency. We all have choices. And Paul is very specific, just even in this short passage, by addressing two groups of the family.

Children have a responsibility as do parents. And all of us fit under the heading of Christian.

[5 : 43] As a saint, as Paul has been teaching us in Ephesians 5, that we are called to walk in holiness. We are called to walk in wisdom.

We are called to walk in light. We are called to walk in the Spirit. And as we come into the family, both we discussed wives and husbands and children and now parents.

It all follows underneath those earlier, the earlier teachings, which Paul spends most of his time on. Just understanding God, understanding who we are in relation to God and how we understand each other as a church in relationships with one another and what our responsibilities are to care for, to love, to even admonish one another, to hold us up, to expect us to reach in, to be a part of our lives. So let's just turn to today's text. Ephesians 6, 1-4.

So that's the first address, right?

[7 : 22] Children are to obey and honour their parents. And we learned last week that there's actually two barriers that a child has when it comes to obeying, when you don't want to obey, right?

The first challenge is our own original sin. And we learned that even as a child is a toddler, they want to do their own thing. Their whole life is about me, me, me.

Rightfully so in some ways. They cry when they want to eat. They cry when they're in pain. Those things are important. But as you start to grow and your child starts to grow, you start to learn and understand that your child's cry is really about me attention.

There is no consideration to the mother and father and what's going on even with other children in the home. And then there's this culture is the second barrier.

There is a war against the family. Last year we talked about what spiritual warfare is and there's an enemy and there's a reason why Paul caps off this incredible letter speaking about the armour of God.

[8 : 39] We need to implement those weapons and armour that God has given to us to sustain us, to protect us.

So when we have these children, as I've said, they're both teens, young adults, adolescents, though still living at home and we're still called to honour our mother and fathers as we become adults.

We now move to the parents' responsibility. Verse 4, Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Now before we get too deep into this, I need you to see a few things from the language that Paul is using in this text. Alright.

I'm sure you might be sitting down watching this video and it says, Father. And the wives can turn over to the husband. Hey, this is all on you. The reality is, the word that Paul uses there for father, he actually uses it in other areas for parent.

[10 : 04] We see this in Hebrews 11, 23. It says, By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents. It's actually the same root word in the Greek.

And we believe, we understand that as mothers, you're just as responsible for what happens in that home as well. So, even though Paul might be saying, Fathers, we can firmly say he's speaking about parents.

Parents who form a team with one another to worship God, to follow his precepts, his instructions, and they raise their children together to do so.

Now, the second thing I need you to understand about this text is that this is an absolutely counter-cultural text. Counter-cultural.

We see that there's two parts to this command that he gives. Don't, right? Don't provoke your children to anger and bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

[11 : 15] At the time, Paul is writing this text. There's a culture that says that the father, the man, the husband, is not only the head of the household as if he's responsibility, as the only one who has responsibility.

He's actually the only one with legal rights, legal protection. In fact, his children and his wife are seen under Roman law as property.

And property can be used or done with whatever the owner wants. So if that father decides he doesn't want his children, he can get rid of them.

There is no law stopping him. He doesn't have to go to a court. He just can get rid of them. In fact, he could even sell his children into slavery. He could even put them to death without no penalty whatsoever.

Okay? So this is the culture that this teaching is entering into. into. So, you live in Ephesus.

[12 : 40] There's this man named Paul and there's other evangelists who come in and they share the gospel of Jesus Christ. You hear them preaching.

You recognize your own sinfulness. And through Paul's teaching, you recognize that you need to follow Jesus. You believe that Jesus Christ has died on the cross to save you from your sins. And you're going all in. This is who you worship. You are abandoning all your former gods, all your idols. You've gotten rid of them. They have no part of your life.

You're all about Jesus. And now then Paul says, okay, I got this God that I love and oh, there's other Christians that I'm bound to. Whoa, Jews and Gentiles.

And we come together and we have this collective witness called the church and we read about how we're to be humble to one another, how to serve one another, to love one another.

[13 : 39] Then all of a sudden, Paul drops this bomb on them. Do not provoke your children. The whole mindset and think about what that does.

Your child is not someone that you use for financial advantage or to put them to work or as an asset to keep your business going.

your child, both your son or daughter, is now recognized as an individual who not just love, but they have expectations from you.

There's an expectation and we're going to look at this that they're not their property but they are their own person.

And I have a responsibility as I'm seeing here to discipline them, to instruct them in the way of the Lord. This would have been upside down thinking for the original readers of this letter.

[15 : 20] It would have brought humiliation, shame. For some, it might be what they always believed. I'm sure there was parents parents that obviously cared for their children beyond the necessity of life that it demanded.

But, you're being confronted with the reality that as much as you've been called to love your wife as Christ loved the church, you are to be Christ-like with your children.

What is Christ-likeness, right? Forgiving, loving, patient, humble, kind, giving. You see, this is where Christian parenting begins.

It's with the acknowledgement that we've been given a responsibility. And the reality is we are just as foolishly and depraved as our children.

We have original sin. That same sin that they struggle with is a part of our lives as well.

[16 : 58] So the reality that parenting begins with humility does not begin with because I'm a parent, I know all.

It begins, the parent is gifted maturity and responsibility because they understand that as Jesus forgave us, we can forgive our children.

Jesus, in modeling us, allows us to love our children. Jesus, patient with us, allows us to be patient with our children. Jesus, who's humble with us, who gave his life for us, allows us to be humble with our children.

He allows us to be gentle, kind. in giving. He's the greatest role model. He's the greatest teacher.

So what Paul is calling to these people in a completely counter-culture situation can be done because Jesus did it and the whole part of Ephesians is you have this spirit working in you to make you more like him.

What a great place to start, right? It's applying the gospel to our own lives. So let's take a look at this first command.

[18 : 31] We're humble. We're understanding. That means humility. We want instruction, right?

Humility isn't, I'm going to tell you how it's done. It's, I'm sitting back, Lord, teach me what you would have me know.

Teach me so I can love this bundle of joy. Or it could be a bundle of stress and fear and anxiety. So it says, first one it says, fathers, parents, do not provoke your children to anger.

What does this mean? It simply means to not aggravate your children. Do not goad them on. Do not deliberately frustrate them.

Do not foolishly discourage them. You see, that is not what Christ does for us, does he? In fact, we demonstrate our submission to Jesus Christ when we're kind, we're gentle, we're patient, we're considerate, we're respecting.

You see, this is us emulating Jesus and being the example for our children. This is power. Most children who have grown up, when I hear their testimonies, the one, number one, biggest influence

is not that they went to church or their parents prayed certain prayers, but their parents modeled the love of Jesus in their lives.

[20 : 11] Their parents just didn't say, we worship Jesus. The parents worshiped Jesus. They saw their parents submit to put their own wants and desires underneath Jesus Christ.

So, this is where it begins. Now, just because a child gets angry doesn't mean you're the one responsible for provoking them. Remember, they have a role to honor and obey your parents. But the reality is when we as parents provoke our children, we're actually sinning against them on two fronts. One, we're causing our child to stumble.

We're putting them in a place where it's easy for them to sin. And secondly, we're violating our duties as parents.

Now, provoke a child to anger and you guys all know who've had multiple children, every child is different.

[21 : 24] So, Paul's not specifically speaking of an anger that is an outward focus. The kid all of a sudden turns mad and he's breaking toys or keying your car.

I don't know what he's going to do. But there's certain kids respond in different ways. Some are the silent fuming types. Some are the indignant outbursts.

And some is the full-fledged rebellious rage. We all know people who walk away and fight inside and there's others who stay and fight outside.

So, just because your child is not exhibiting anger, outward frustration, does not mean you are not provoking your child to anger.

So, Paul is teaching us to provoke your child to anger is not a good thing. So, how do we do that?

[22 : 36] How do parents do these things? Well, just this week, I'm pulling in, I've got several different books on parenting, and I would recommend several to you.

I don't think there is one master plan. I have seen a child raising system that's quite in-depth, and they used to call it in a way to grow your child to love Christ, but they've kind of changed it to how to manage your child to obey.

Because they've come to understand that we ultimately aren't responsible for our child's salvation, and you can't make a child obey. But there is a way to manage your household. There's certain habits that you can develop, just as we can develop proper habits that lead to proper fitness, proper reading schedules that help our mind.

There are certain things that you can do in your home to help you. One of the books that I've always is shepherding a child's heart.

That helps us understand some of the issues that are here. So I'm going to give you some of the examples I've read in some of the books. One book that I'd recommend is called Successful Christian Parenting.

[23 : 47] And another book, if you're asking, is Entrusted with a Child's Heart. If you're a new parent and you're going into this, please engage Dave and I. We do have the resources.

You might be saying, well, Dave and BK haven't raised little baby babies, so they don't know what they're doing. But we have been attentive to understanding what is out there.

We've watched. We've observed. What are the systems, the understandings that help with a gospel-focused way to raise your kids?

So a couple ones that all the books talk about, and you really don't need books to tell you this. I was a camp counselor. I spent time in youth ministry. I have worked through university.

And I know any type of application of these things causes problems. First one is called excessive discipline. We can exasperate, provoke our child to anger when we are excessively disciplining them.

[24 : 52] The reality is some parents try to mold every aspect of their child with discipline. And it can get to the point that a child may feel that he cannot do right because everything is wrong and disciplined.

I have seen in those sad realities where parents believe that a little discipline is good, therefore a lot of discipline must be better.

That has resulted in horrible relationships when the children eventually lost and left the home. The Bible is quite clear that there is no punishment should ever be brutal or bullying towards a child.

Any form of discipline brought against a child should always be administered with the good of the child in mind. Never more than necessary and always in love.

And I have seen some parents who grew up outside of a Christian home. They come to Christ. They want to do everything right.

[26 : 08] And they focused on the discipline thing. And it got so hard for one family. I actually went to school and seminary. He ended up having to go to prison for doing what he thought was right.

But sadly, he was unguided, did not seek out the wisdom of pastors. He heard different sermons and took a lot of sayings out of context.

So one, do not excessively discipline your child. Number two, inconsistent punishment, right? If your child is punished for something three out of or one out of every five times, it confuses them. Then they think it's unfair. Well, you punish me on Monday for that, but not on Tuesday or Wednesday. This also happens when you discipline one child one way or another another way. The reality is punishment always needs to be consistent. And the way a parent is consistent is to be diligent. Our desire is to emulate Christ and raising them in Christ-likeness.

[27 : 24] One of the best examples is a friend of mine. He's got six or seven children. And he's very consistent across the board. But what he's consistent in is when it comes time for discipline, the children will always understand what they're being disciplined for.

He'll take them aside and he'll explain it. And he makes sure they understand that they accept the discipline because they accept that they have been rebellious and they've been not only disobeying his parents or her parents, but God as well.

The third way that you can provoke your child to anger is just simply being unkind in your punishment. Being mean-spirited. Publicly embarrassing them. Sometimes parents say some incredibly hurtful words.

You know you've been there. You're so angry. It's always best never to do anything in anger. Or when we're fearful, especially as our children grow up, fear can overtake us and we can say things that, I wish you were more like your brother.

Or you can cite someone else. That is a way to make and provoke your child to anger. Another way, as we all know, is show favoritism to one child more than another.

[28 : 42] There's this great biblical understanding based on the man Jacob. Right? Jacob and his brother Esau, their father Isaac. Isaac favored Esau.

Rebecca favored Jacob. Huge problems in that family. And it would seem that Jacob was so thick of mind when he had other kids.

First of all, he has two wives. He got swindled in his wife selection. But he favored one wife over the other. You don't think that causes problems? But then he's got 12 sons and he favors the one over the other 11.

And how do those brothers respond? They want to kill him. In fact, they're trying to kill him and then they just decide to sell him into slavery instead.

Favoritism in your family can be devastating. And I'm not just even talking about smaller kids. We know as adults, sometimes we favor other children over others.

[29 : 47] And it could be for a myriad of circumstances. Honestly, in my home, my favorite kid is the one who does what I ask him to do. It's really simple. Right?

But some families have been destroyed just because one child lives closer to home. They favor that child because they see him. But the reality is God has called your other child and their spouse somewhere else because of career or some other issue.

That's not their fault. So parents need to be diligent in this. One way that provokes a child to anger, which seems counter, is to overly indulge your child.

It's to give him what he wants or what she wants. It's to provide no boundaries. You might think it's spreading their wings and they do all sorts of things.

And I've commented, when parents don't parent your kid, you're actually leaving someone else to eventually come and take care of them. If they're ever able to even assimilate themselves into a normal relationship, whether in marriage or even work.

[30 : 58] But studies have demonstrated that children who were raised were in a too permissive environment grow up to feel more insecure and more unloved.

You see this even in public situations where a child will act in rebellious ways just to get attention, whether it be from the Sunday school teacher, the teacher at school, football coach, doesn't matter. Because all child, they want to be loved. They want to be seen for who they are. They want to be respected. Even though they may not think in those terms.

And sadly later on, some of them give themselves over sexually to relationships just to have that love. To be cared for. A child wants boundaries.

And I believe you're provoking your children by not granting them this. Proverbs 13:24 writes, Whoever spares the rod hates his son.

[32 : 05] But he who loves him is diligent to discipline him. The reality is parents cannot be too lazy. We cannot be too indifferent.

Sixth way to provoke your child is the overprotective parent. It's not letting them do anything. You fence them in.

You suffocate them. You're making all your decisions for them. Yes, you can't let your child make every decision. But they are capable of some choices. And walking with them. Why they make those choices.

We've heard the term helicopter mom. There's some situations where children need to be protected. It's kind of funny.

Of all the things that I look back from my childhood that affected me, it was this one. My father, being a police officer, didn't trust anybody. So when it came to school trips, I couldn't go.

[33 : 06] Leadership camps, couldn't go. Couldn't operate the snowmobile or the boat, the motorized boat. They seem small, but when every one of your friends has been given responsibility to use those things and you feel that you can't, you start to wonder as a child, am I responsible?

Is there something wrong with me? And sometimes the parent means so well. But they need to be cognizant of the idea that you can't overprotect them.

Especially in a good rule of measure, if you know their friends, their peers, and they're all that level of same maturity, you can let them do things together that correspond to one another.

We're not talking about the crazy kid who lives to do whatever he wants, but we're talking about God honoring children. This one I saw a lot of times when I was in university was the constant pressure to achieve.

That parents can drive their children to become more or better than what they were. They drive their children.

[34 : 15] There's rarely any praise. There's just a drive to do better. If you fail to encourage, you fail to comfort even in failure, you're running the risk of damaging your child.

The reality is they will resent you. And it can cause great pain. Your children aren't a mini you. As much as you may want them to be, some you don't want them to be. They will have certain likes, dislikes. They will have different...

My one friend... Hey, we all wanted to have kids that were great athletes. We played sports. And he had a daughter, which I'm sure he'll never tell you he was disappointed about, but she became a really good athlete.

And he, you know, very proud of her and doing a lot of things that she does. But she lacks a drive that he had. And she's interested in other things. And I remember she came and said, I don't want to play sports anymore.

[35 : 25] I want to work after school. And he couldn't believe it. It was... Broke his heart for a couple of weeks, but he got over it. But you have to allow your child to have their own likes and dislikes.

Yes, you need to guide them. But if you give them a constant pressure to be someone that they are not or something that they hate, you can cause division in your household. So some of the other ways that are practical is don't neglect.

Don't be cruel. Don't be a hypocrite. Don't be indifferent. Don't criticize. Don't be detached. A lack of fairness, deliberate humiliation will cause strife.

Colossians 3:1 says, fathers, do not provoke your children lest they become discouraged. I think every parent here wants an encouraged child.

So it's interesting. He begins with the negative. Don't force them to be angry. And I don't know why Paul put that there first.

[36 : 28] I often wonder if that was the most direct, important point that needed to be made in that culture. That a child is not your property, but your responsibility.

So let's just take a look at the way the passage is written here. Do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

So we're getting on the second half of this, right? So there's this term, discipline and instruction. It's kind of a cold term, right?

When we think of the term discipline, who really wants that term? We think of discipline as it could be corporal punishment.

If you're an athlete, it means getting up early, working hard. But sometimes there's almost this negative connotation. But the term that Paul uses here can be understood in the context of child rearing.

[37 : 44] And because of that, it means upbringing, okay? And upbringing includes admonishing, which is punishing, right? It means warning them when there's danger, protecting them.

It means exhorting them, giving them good information. It means giving them a word of encouragement. And it means reproof and corrective behavior.

And this is used several times in Scripture. 1 Timothy 3.16 says, All scriptures breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

We see a couple of things there. This discipline and instruction. You can almost say it's for the child of God to be complete, to be mature, to be equipped to do good works, to obey, to worship God.

Right? Hebrews 12.5-6 says, My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord. We think harshness. But the term that he's using here is actually a gentle, mild term.

[39 : 09] It's not a severe term. One author says, We could easily use the word nurture in this context.

Because context directs our understanding. Nurture. We all get this, right? It means to be tender. Affectionate. Loving instruction. Sympathetic care. It's we're coming down to that child. It's not an object that we're responsible for.

But this is our child that is loved by God and loved by us. So in the face of Paul's culture, this isn't a child you get rid of if you don't like him.

This is your responsibility. Now notice the term. It says bring them up. Paul actually uses that same term in Ephesians 5.29.

[40 : 14] He says, For no one ever hates his flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it. Okay? That nourishes is the same word for bring them up.

So we could go in, you know, but to bring them up, to nourish them, and to nurture them of the Lord. Right? The discipline instruction is to nurture them in the Lord. And it begins with this understanding.

We think nurture means to feed. We understand maturity doesn't happen on its own. It needs to be taught. It needs parents are to provide parental guidance.

One author simply states, The more a child is left to themselves, the less they will become what they're or who they're supposed to be. One of the things that I did not understand when we had our dog is what you're supposed to do.

[41 : 22] I never had a dog before. So five years ago, my wife and I decided we were going to get a dog. And I read all the dog books that I could. I watched dog videos. And one of the things that they really stressed is when a dog is taken into a home, it can become too much of a person.

The dog forgets that he's a dog. And that it's so important to leave the dog with his mother for about the first eight to ten weeks of its life.

Not even just for the feeding part. But to understand how to socialize. And how to be a dog.

How to eat, sleep, all those things that we love about our dogs. But it doesn't happen on its own.

When you take a dog out of that, you actually will get a very troubled animal often.

Who doesn't respond. It's actually not safe in your home. You just can't not teach your child to be mature.

[42 : 26] They're not going to learn those things on their own. It's your role to teach them this. To nurture them.

You want the best for them. And as we learned last week, children have a heart problem. It's original sin.

They actually begin by being rebels against God. And this primary instruction of the Lord, the primary instruction that we are to give our children is to be spiritual.

Too often as parents, we think manners are the most important thing. We think in terms of behavior. When what Paul is calling, it's a heart issue that we need to address.

My friend that I described earlier, making sure his children understood their punishment. He actually explains to them why they're disobeying.

[43 : 40] Why they're fighting against mom and dad's rule in their life. And he explains to them why God has called them to obey their parents.

And it's submitting to that role. And in that, he has an opportunity to explain what sin is. And obviously, at an early age, they don't understand.

But as they continue to grow in that instruction, they start to get it. They accept it. Then they're battling their sin. Not so much the bad behavior, right?

So, right from the beginning, my friend, his example is he is planting seeds for the gospel at the very start of this child's life.

And with all that teaching, they're watering it. They're growing. You know, by he's tending the soil because he's not aggravating them. Because he is diligent in his time with them.

[44 : 46] The reality is, a troubled heart can be covered up with good behavior and manners. There's a lot of children. My friend got a lot of compliments on how he's got 11 kids.

And man, they're disciplined. When you look at them, you don't think they have any problems. He says, BK, the problem is they're too well-mannered and they're too well-obedient. It's hard to get at the bottom of their hearts.

What is going on? Luke 6, 45 says, Anger, horrible words.

Those things originate in the heart. Mark 7, 21 to 23. For from within, out of the heart of man, comes evil thought, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness.

All these evil things come from within and they defile a person. Right? We knew that's what Jesus Christ, when he was dealing with the Pharisees, it's the inside.

[46 : 15] And as parents, we want to deal with the inside. We want to speak to the inside. So the parents begin with giving children instruction that they need to understand their sin.

Now the problem is, your child ultimately needs a new heart. That's not the problem.

The problem is, you can't give them one. You cannot give your child a new heart. But what you can give your child is an example of one who submits to the will of Christ and who has asked Jesus into their life, who has bowed the knee and made Jesus Lord and believes and follows everything that Jesus does.

That's the most powerful thing you can do to begin the process of your child having a new heart.

The fact of the matter is, only Jesus Christ can give your child a new heart. But God the Father uses you as an instrument of his love to bring their eternal truth to your child's heart.

[47 : 45] You can explain to them why they need a new heart. You can explain to them why Jesus is the only way to heaven. He's the only way to deal with their anger, their frustrations.

But even when they feel like prisoners caught in their own envy or selfishness or whatever sin they're boxed in, you can teach them about the hope that is in Jesus Christ.

That Jesus Christ died to unlock our chains, to free us of the prisons of anger, envy, selfishness, self-esteem thinking.

All those things are just prisons of lies. Jesus Christ is the hope. Jesus Christ is the only one who provides forgiveness and redemption.

This, my friend, is the single greatest thing you can train your children in. As you point to Jesus, you persist in prayer, and you point to the cross.

[49 : 03] That is your role. To not point to Jesus. To not persist in prayer.

And to not continue to hold and be the example. You are neglecting to nurture them in the love of the Lord Jesus Christ.

You see, only the Spirit can give this new birth. You see, here's the thing about parenting that Paul writes.

Discipline, nurture them, and instruct them of the Lord. It's not about controlling behavior, but it's maturing them to learn about life.

And what I mean is that you're not just going to teach them good manners and such, but where I found most parents lacking, even adult parents, who are good Christian parents, is that they do not give enough instruction.

[50 : 18] They teach the Bible stories, but they fail to teach how to think biblically, right? They fail to teach them how to deal with temptation.

They're familiar with sin when it comes to fighting their parents, but they need to know that there's pride is sin, that lust is sin, that envy is sin, and that we live in a world system that is going to fight them.

And if they can understand that all those sins are both offenses to God first, they can understand the remedy for dealing with those things in their lives.

Paul basically tells us, 1 Timothy 3.16, when we bring biblical teaching to our children, it says, So, as parents, we're being taught not just to obey and honor us, but to think biblically.

It's how do we put that word of God into action in our own lives. One of the most effective means I've seen is the parents who don't really, it doesn't matter what the child thinks, but it's more important for the parent to unwind why the child thinks the way they do.

[52 : 06] I'll give you a certain example. My friend and his wife go through a tough time. He's fired from his job. He's got to adjust. He's got three kids.

They're all older. One daughter's still in high school. The daughter gets assaulted at school. And she knows that the father's quite stressed about not finding another job.

There's house payments, school, all those things that he's got. So, there's a fair amount of stress going on. But for some reason, she thought it would be loving for her dad not to tell him about this assault that happened against her.

Meanwhile, this poor young thing is trying to process at 16 what happened to her. And, you know, once he finally got to the bottom of it, he found that she was thinking wrongly.

The why she thought was that his daughter is precious to her. And he always, it doesn't matter anything, even though she thought she was good, she didn't want to put that burden on her dad.

[53 : 17] Her dad understands what it means to love her, and he's got that capability. So, we sometimes need to work with our children to understand why they think the way they do.

Moses gives us the best instruction. We read it last week. Deuteronomy 6, 6, 9. For these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.

You shall teach them, here's the same instruction, diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house. That means you're going to talk about what it is to follow God.

How do we act like Jesus in this situation? We're incorporating this all of the time. And when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise, Jesus just isn't the prayer at dinnertime.

I have grace. I've got more than enough friends from the past who lived, went to church, and they said, the only time my dad ever said anything biblical was at prayer, and the rest of the time he lived as a pagan.

[54 : 24] And he thought he was a Christian. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand. That means to know God's word. And they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.

You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gate. That's like putting a big sign up that says, in this house, we worship God.

That's how we want to be diligent in instructing our children. We instruct, nurture.

The second way we teach all these things is to be an example. The third element, and I'll conclude with this, is there's a discipline, punishment, portion to it.

Children are going to have consequences when they do not obey you. I grew up with the wooden spoon, the belt.

[55 : 29] I still remembered in our classrooms, there was the strap across the hand if we were disobeying our teacher. Times have changed. Laws are in place.

But I really believe there is a good place for corporal punishment in the lives of discipline. But there's plenty of ways that we can use to discipline our kids, right?

There's verbal rebukes, there's time outs, there's groundings, there's removal of privileges. We do live in a day where you're not supposed to do anything, even remotely negative.

But the Bible says opposite, actually. Proverbs 23, 13 says, do not withhold discipline from a child. If you strike him with a rod, he will not die.

Now people get upset, oh, that word strike. That doesn't mean beat. Okay? There were certain things I knew when I grew up that if I did, I'd get the wooden spoon.

[56 : 38] As an example, and I may have used this illustration, I used to walk home from kindergarten to my home. A lot different today, but back then I used to walk through this neighborhood and there would be construction.

Houses would be being built. Big holes. And I do remember getting caught playing in one of those holes. The problem with those holes was rain would happen, fill up those holes, and I could easily drown.

That wooden spoon saved my life. Because I was too young to understand that foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child.

It's like a child who does not understand. They might need a slap in the hand to not touch the oven, the stove. It's protection.

It's not an anger. It's not done as a regular means. But it's to protect them. But every parent needs to use what is right given your convictions and your child and the situation.

[57 : 52] You always need to use wisdom, restraint, love, and understanding. Three tips that I've seen offered by most books.

I've brought them together. One, discipline needs to be consistent. Let your yes be yes. Let your no's be no's. Two, the punishment needs to fit the crime. Don't take away their driving privileges because they didn't take out the garbage that week.

Or maybe that is a good one. I don't know. But you need to use wisdom. You can exasperate your child a lot when it's a small infraction or even it's just an outburst to take away something that could be long term and hurt.

And the third principle is always as much as possible be positive in your training. When it's talking about blessings in the text, what it's telling us is to reward positive behavior.

Reward children who obey you. Don't be neutral and only be negative when you need to punish them for something. Give them reasons to obey something positive.

[59 : 09] My dog will do anything if I give him a treat. It's true. It's positive. He'll do very little if I'm negative or hit him to do something. That'd be horrible.

Ultimately, I think the greatest prayer that a parent needs to pray is they need grace to see, wisdom to understand, and firm determination to apply godly principles to the growing of your children.

May God bless you in that endeavor. Let me pray. Dear, holy, heavenly father, pray for wisdom for our church.

We pray that our parents would be given the grace to see and understand the hearts of their child, to see where they're at, to see how to communicate with them, both to encourage them and to punish them, to see rebelliousness as opposed to seeing foolishness.

Father, give them true wisdom to understand your words. Father, I just, I just believe there's so many dangers in the extremes.

[60 : 30] And the biggest problem I've always found when families make a lot of errors in this area is they do not get help. Sometimes they do need help from friends.

They do need help from pastors. They need help from other parents. Sometimes it can feel a little bit shameful to do that, but Father, it is not.

It's wise. It's honoring to you. Lord, I just pray that you'd humble us all. I even pray that just as some of us are grandparents or parents or kids are out of the house that we would notice the families that are here and perhaps even those kids that are either fatherless or motherless due to situations of life.

Pray that we'd want to spend more love to care for those souls who have not been brought up in wisdom but who've been allowed foolishness.

Father, I am grateful for the older men and the older ladies that reached into my crash life as a kid. There was not a lot of instruction given but I'm grateful for my mother who sought to expose me to the gospel as much as possible.

[61 : 52] Whether it be camps, friends, church, all the places where her single greatest prayer was that a godly man would recognize me and my need to be instructed.

And I give you thanks for the different men that came in to teach me about life. I really believe you have that for all of us.

Thank you for the examples that you provide us. We thank you for the parents here who are determined to nurture their children in a way that would honor you.

What a responsibility. What a blessing. Thank you Jesus for all that you do, all that you provide for us. Father, I pray that there be fruit from this sermon.

I pray there be fruit for any life that finally gets to a point and bows down to you and makes you Lord of all. We ask these things in your name.

[62 : 55] Amen. Let's talk.

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