

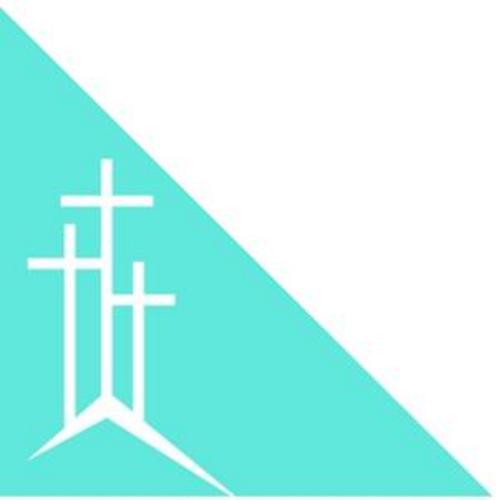
A person's hands are shown holding a pair of black and white sneakers. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green grass and a white fence. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark green filter.

Chapters 4 and 5

PARENTING

Gospel Principles That Can Radically Change Your Family

Review



Chapter 4: Inability

Principle: Recognizing what you are unable to do is essential to good parenting.

1. Read the 5 statements on your worksheet.
 1. Discuss with those at your table: “What’s wrong with these statements?”
 2. *“Each of them [statements] assumes power on the part of parents that no parent has, and that assumption creates all kinds of trouble.” (Tripp, 60)*



Authority vs. Power

2. “Parents, here’s what you need to understand: God has given you authority for the work of change, but has not granted you the power to make that change happen.” (Tripp, 61)



Temporary vs. Lasting Change

3. “You can scare or reward your children into temporary change.” (Tripp, 61)
4. “Let me say it this way: the behavior of your children is symptomatic of what is going on inside your children. Inside change always precedes lasting outside change.” (Tripp, 61)



The Result.....

5. “if as a parent you think that you have power that you don’t have, you will do things that you should not do and you will fail to do the things that are vital to do.” (Tripp, 61)

Your parenting will tend to be:

- A. Demanding
- B. Aggressive
- C. Threatening
- D. Focused on rules
- E. Focused on punishments



The Result.....



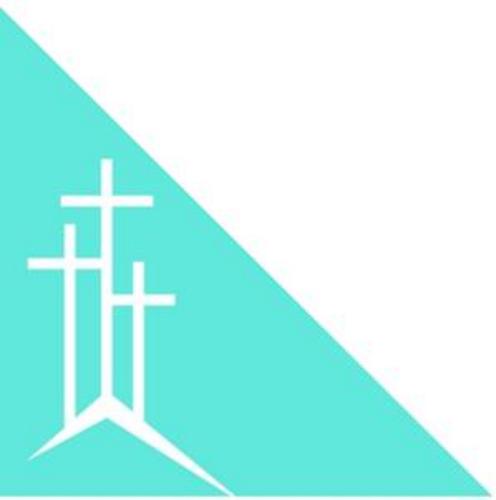
6. “In this form of parenting, it is all about you and your children, rather than you being an agent of what only God can do in your children.” (Tripp, 62)



Table discussion:

7. Discuss at your tables: Do your children need your authority? Why or why not?

“Your children do need you to exercise authority, but not as the creator of change. They need you to exercise authority as the representative of the author of all lasting change.” (Tripp, 62)



How do we do that?

8. “Representing the God who gives us grace for change means looking for daily opportunities to communicate that grace, helping our children to see how they need that grace, and modeling that grace in the way we speak and act toward our children.” (Tripp, 63)
9. What this doesn’t mean:
 - A. Giving up parental authority
 - B. Letting children do whatever they want
 - C. Giving up correction and discipline
 - D. Ignoring your children’s wrongs



Parental Power Tools

Power Tool #1: Fear

“issue a big enough threat that creates a big enough fear to change our kids.” (Tripp, 63)

A. This leads to temporary change.



Parental Power Tools

Power Tool #2: Reward

Read Josh's story.

What happened?!?!

*“There was no recognition of wrong or desire for change at all inside Josh.”
(Tripp, 66)*

This leads to temporary change.



Parental Power Tools



Power Tool #3: Shame

“After all I’ve done for you, and this is the way you’re going to treat me.”

- A. Horizontal guilt vs.
- B. Vertical guilt

This leads to temporary change.



God doesn't Need to Control

12. “The lack of communication, closeness, and affection that exists between parents and their older children is often the sad legacy of the ways we tried to control our kids. Our heavenly Father is never content with just controlling us. Control is no problem for him; he’s sovereign after all.” (Tripp, 69)



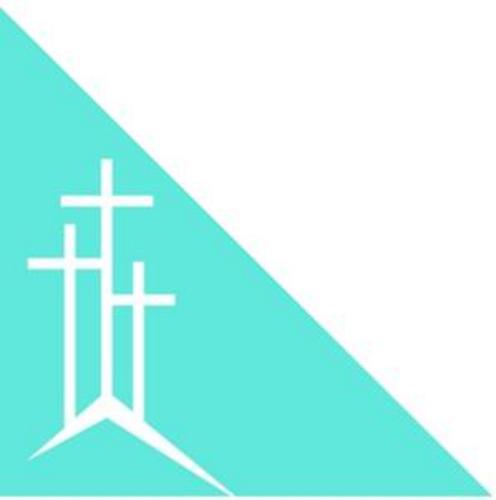
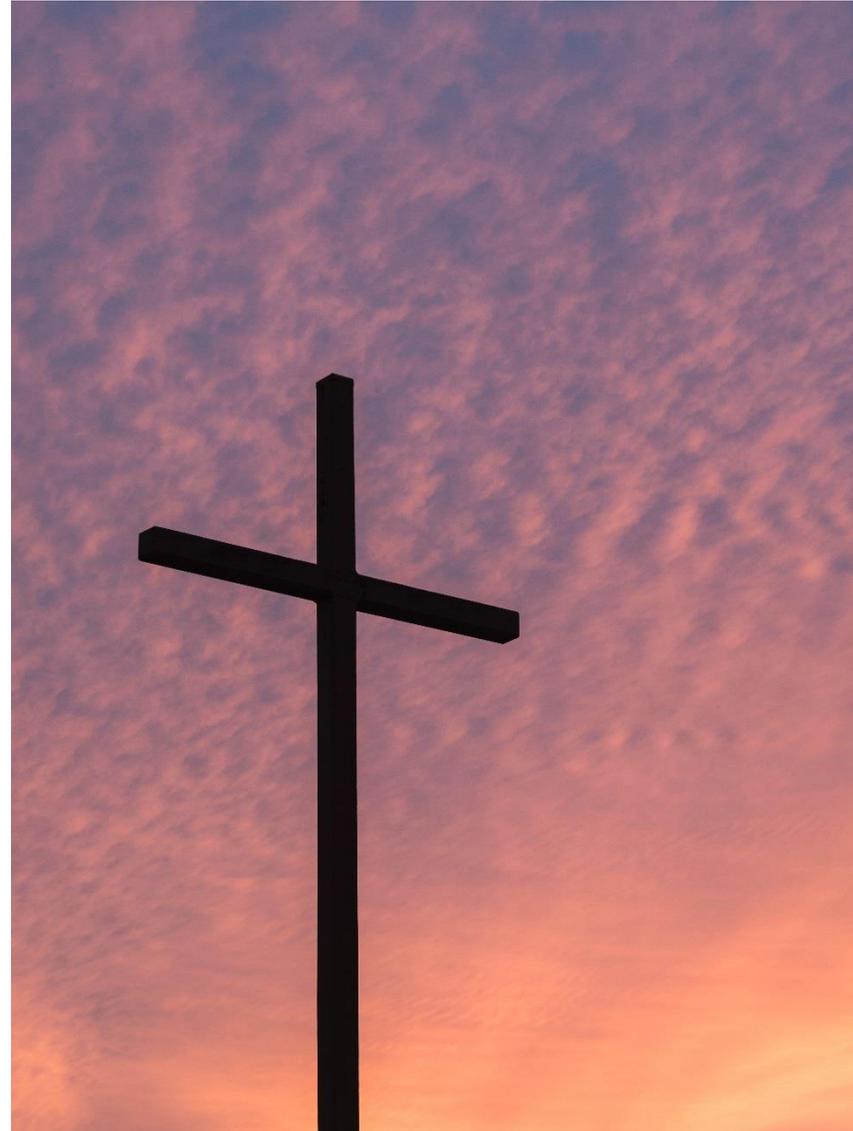
Final thoughts:

13. “Good parenting lives at the intersection of a humble admission of personal powerlessness and confident rest in the power and grace of God. “ (Tripp, 69)
- A. How/when is your parenting driven by worry? How does this worry cause you to do or say things you shouldn't do or say?
 - B. How can you find confident rest in God's grace this week?



Chapter Five: Identity

Principle: If you are not resting as a parent in your identity in Christ, you will look for identity in your children.



The Sally Example

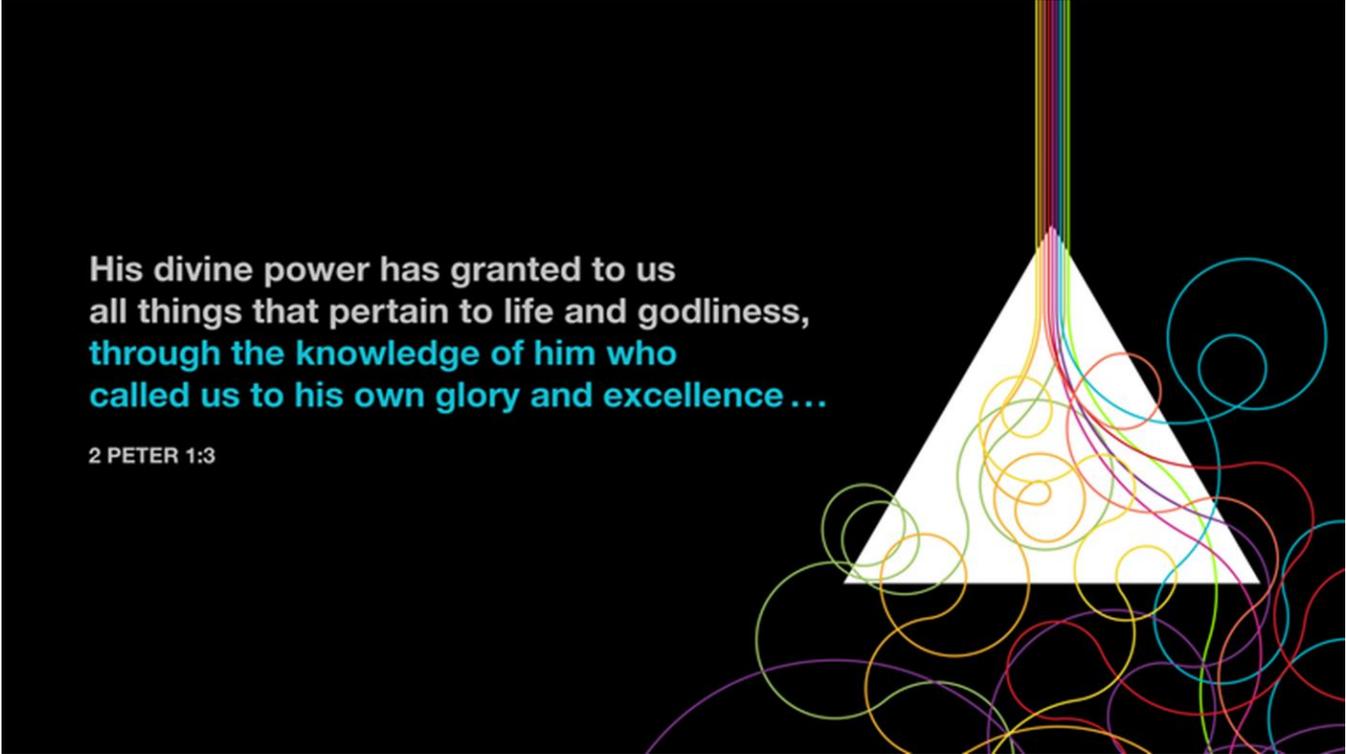
“Sally was committed to her dream of lavishly successful children, so not only was she driven and unrelenting, but she drove them too.”

- Skim Sally and Jamie’s story on pages 72 and 73
- Try to put yourself in Sally’s shoes and discuss at your table: “What is going on with Sally or any parent when they drive a child to mental, physical, and emotional exhaustion?”



The Identity Quest

“There are only two places for you and me to look for identity. One place to look is vertically, getting our identity and the direction and assessment of potential from God—from his love and acceptance, his forgiving grace, his constant presence, his power and his promises, and the glory of all these that he’s showered down on us.” (Tripp, 76)



His divine power has granted to us
all things that pertain to life and godliness,
through the knowledge of him who
called us to his own glory and excellence ...

2 PETER 1:3

The Identity Quest



“If you are not resting in your vertical identity, you will look horizontally, searching to find yourself and your reason for living in something in the creation.... The problem with this is that created things were never designed to give you identity.” (Tripp, 76)



Trying to get your identity from your children:

1. It is a very natural thing to do and very hard to fight.
2. Parenting is a miserable place to look for identity.
3. It is a crushing burden for your children to carry the heavy load of your identity, meaning and purpose and all the expectations and demands that flow from it.



Trying to get your identity from your children:

“It just never works to ask your children to be your own personal saviors. This is a burden they will never bear well, and it will introduce trouble and struggle into your relationship with them. Jesus is your life, and this frees you and your children from the burden of asking them to give you what your Savior has already given you.” (Tripp, 79)



Am I doing this????

Signs your parenting is driven by what you need from your children rather than by what God wants to do through your children:

1. Too much focus on success
2. Too much concern about reputation
3. Too great a desire for control
4. Too much emphasis on doing rather than being
5. Too much temptation to make it personal



Some Comfort:

“Isn’t it good to know that because we are the children of God, we have reason to continue even on our worst, most disastrous parenting day? Isn’t it good to know that as Jesus fully satisfies our hearts, we don’t have to ask our children to provide that satisfaction? It really is the completeness of the work of Jesus for us that frees us from coming to our parenting task needy, exhausted, and discouraged, asking our children to give us what we will never every be able to give.” (Tripp, 83)

