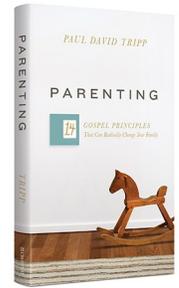


# Chapter 3 **LAW**

Sunday, October 1, 2017

**Principle:** Your children need's God's law, but you cannot ask the law to do what only grace can accomplish.

**"PARENTING: 14 Gospel Principles That Can Radically Change Your Family"**  
by Paul David Tripp



### OPENING QUESTIONS:

While growing up, what is one rule in your house that stands out in your memory?

### Identifying the Problem

As a group, observe how parents in each situation are relying on the law (rules) to change or shape their child's behavior.

- Situation # 1 Josh (16) rebellion
- Situation # 2 Jessica (3) counting to 3
- Situation # 3 Emma (17) strayed by culture
- Situation # 4 Rob (18) sexual orientation

### A Subtle but Foundation Mistake

"One theme runs through each of these stories, an error that each of these loving and well meaning parents is making. Did you see it? Consider that every parent puts their confidence in something. Every parent knows that their children have to grow, mature, and change. As a parent you know that it is your job to help form character (obedience, respect, honesty, willingness, etc) in your children. So as a parent, you will rely on something to create change in your children." (48)

"If I watched the last six weeks of your parenting, how you evaluate your children and seek to work change in them, what would I conclude is the primary too that you're relying on? (49)

"Now read what I write very carefully. I am convinced that without knowing it, thousands and thousands of well-meaning Christian parents are asking the law to do in the lives of their children what only the powerful grace of God can accomplish." (49)

**Review from Previous Week**

Chapter 2 **GRACE Principle:** God never calls you to a task without giving you what you need to do it. He never sends you without going with you.

**ILLUSTRATIONS**

bowl w/ water Why did H2O come out?  
 bowl w/ cotton balls  
 bowl w/ living water (God in us)  
 rocks & putty = hard hearts & tender hearts.

**THE GRACE OF GOD**  
**God's PRESENT Grace**  
**God calls those who *are not able***  
**God puts Himself in us!**  
**God's Grace Works in Us** (pp.38-39) (40-43)

- rescues you from you
- grows & changes you as a parent
- make your heart tender



## Parenting: 14 Gospel principles that can radically change your family.



If rules and regulations had the power to change the heart and life of your child, rescuing your child from himself and giving him a heart of submission and faith, Jesus would have never needed to come! (p49)

Is the law good? Absolutely! Our children need God's law, just as we do. Functions of the Law

1. Curb
2. Mirror (Tripp calls it "grace of conviction")
3. Guide

"Like all human beings, children were not made to be self-governing, that is, to be guided by independent thoughts and desires. Children need to be given tracks to run on and boundaries to say inside of. So God in His wonderful mercy give us His law so that our behavior would be guided by a clear knowledge of what is right and wrong." (p.50)

"Your children would have no idea that they are sinners in need of protection, wisdom, forgiveness, and rescue without the standard of God's law." (p.50)

"A child who does not see himself clearly will resist his parent's wisdom, guidance, discipline, and correction. Why? Because he doesn't think he needs it." (50)

**But the law can only do so much!**

"If all that your children needed was the knowledge and enforcement of rules, then the life, death and resurrection of Jesus would not have been necessary." (p.51)

### The Law Can't Change the Heart

"The law has no ability to give your child a new heart." (p.51)

**Worse, we often replace God's law with OUR law** (rules about daily chores and what we want)  
**Even more Worse, we make up our own laws for our children**

"Think of how little of your anger as a parent in the last few months had anything at all to do with God's law." (p.52)

**Remember the real problem: it's sin!**

"Remember, it's the sin inside them that messes everything up." (52)



**Parenting: 14 Gospel principles that can radically change your family.**

**++ at tables ++**

**What do you think about this statement?**

"If you are ever going to function as God's ambassador, you need to be rescued by powerful grace from your bondage to you. As parents, we need to be rescued from our addiction to the law of our comfort, pleasure, success, and control. It's not our children sins that is in the way of good parenting, it's our tendency to make parenting about our little kingdom of wants, needs, and desires, and our tendency to want our children to serve the purposes of our kingdom rather than submit to the purposed of God's kingdom." (p.53)

Great story about Dad's cinnamon rolls



Dad was all about his cinnamon rolls, - & wanted his kids to be about them also!

**You Need to Preach the Gospel to Your Children**

"It is when you confess that you don't have a prayer of being what God wants you to be and doing what God wants you to do as a parent without the rescuing and enabling grace of God." (p.54)



Tripp's big on this:  
"Parents, we all need to have an "everything I do, I do to point my children to the presence and promises of God's grace" way of parenting our children." (p.54)

**GREAT QUOTE**

"There will be no want of opportunities to talk to your children about their inescapable need for God's grace. There will be no lack of opportunity for telling them the story of how Jesus meets those needs. Because, by God's plan, every good thing, every beautiful thing, every hard thing, every sad thing, and everything to celebrate gives us an opportunity to point to the God who, in grace, rules it all. The question is: will you see those opportunities in the mundane moments of parenting and capture them again and again and again?" (p.55)

**So, how will you do this?**

NOW FOR PRACTICALITY

**You Need to Model the Gospel of Grace to Your Children**

"I was committed to what was right for my children, but I went at it in the wrong way.

- *I can't believe that you would do such a thing!"*
- *"I do and do and do for you, and this is the thanks I get!"*
- *You don't want to know what's going to happen if I have to come up those stairs one more time!*
- *"Would you just be quiet for one meal so I can for once eat in peace?"*

"No child hears that kind of talk and says to himself, "What a wise and loving parent! I know I can share my heart with this person. I just wish he would say more of these things to me! I am so thankful that this person is my parent! I think I'm beginning to see my heart."

"If we are ever to represent the great Father well, we need to be fathered by Him as well. If we are going to give grace to our children, we need to confess that we are but children in daily need of the Father's care." (p.56)



GOOD NEWS – Our Father never gives up on us!

"You see, it is only as we are willing to confess that we are more like than unlike our children, that we ourselves need parenting every day, that we will be parents in need of a father's grace who will again and again lead our children to the grace of the Father." (p.57)

**Group Discussion Questions**

1. What will look, sound and feel different when we parent the hearts of our children and not just their behavior?
2. Why do threatening, manipulating and using guilt not really work?
3. What needs to first happen for your children to be able to confess their own sin?

**Personal Reflection**

1. Does your parenting and training focus on the hearts of your children or just their behavior?
2. What is your motivation (what is in your heart) that persuades you to use threats, manipulation or guilt with your children?
3. How well do your children respond to your discipline and when you address their sin? Is there something you could do differently that will foster a listening spirit within your child?