

## Book of Proverbs: Parenting

Today we are looking at what the Book of Proverbs has to say about one of the most important things we can do as human beings.

- And that is raising Children. What does God have to say about Parenting?
  - Because whether you know this or not, you are absolutely discipling your children daily. The question is, are you modeling what it looks like to be a faithful/obedient follower of Jesus.
  - Or are you teaching them to love the things of this world.
    - You may be sitting here thinking to yourself: Christian, your kids are only 7 & 4 years old. So how much experience do you really have?

**So just a few quick disclaimers before we start:** And we often need to do that especially going through the Book of Proverbs:

- 1. This is not everything you will need to know about parenting. I get about 30 minutes to stand up here to be selective on what big topics to touch on.
- 2. This isn't even everything that Proverbs says about Parenting.
  - And there are several books throughout the Bible that I could be going through
- 3. I am not an expert on Parenting. We are all figuring out this stuff as we go.
  - We can read all the best parenting books out there, but if our heart isn't changed by the Gospel, then we are going off of our own human/worldly wisdom on how to parent. Which may not always honor Jesus.

Now, what I will say is that **it is humbling to stand up here to teach on this**

- Because I am reminded every single day where I fail and fall short as a Father, and as a Husband.
  - In which I need God's grace for forgiveness when I do wrong to my kids, when I act in anger towards them.
  - I put my own selfish desires above their needs.
  - And I need God's grace to help them grow into Godly people despite my own failures.

And so please here my heart, I come to you not as someone who thinks I have all the answers.

- I am someone who is on this journey with you.
- My goal here is to help us carefully examine what it means to be **faithful and obedient parents according to the scriptures.**

Now with a topic like this there is always going to be questions of applicability.

- Look around the room: Obviously not all of us here in this room are parents.
- But I don't think it's much of a stress to say that if you follow Jesus you will eventually find yourself in some kind of parental/discipleship role in someone's life.
  - In fact you, you should be finding yourself in that kind of role often.
  - In other words, Ministry requires us to apply parental principles to all kinds of people and all kinds of situations.
  - Children- Yes. Teenagers- Yes. And even a lot of times adults.
    - And this is actually at the heart of the Book of Proverbs.

You see, if I ask the question, who is helped by the wisdom of Proverbs?- the correct answer is "We all are!".

- And yet major sections of Proverbs are framed as wise advice given from a Father to a son.
  - **Proverbs 1:8 "My Child, listen when your Father corrects you. Don't neglect your Mother's instruction."**
  - Or look at **Proverbs 23:19 "My Child, listen and be wise. Keep your heart on the right course."**
    - And then in the next few verses you see more wisdom and great advice for everyone.
    - So none of us should think "Well I don't have kids so this does not apply to me." It absolutely applies to you. Because part of being wise yourself is communicating wisdom to others.
    - The HOME is the primary place where this happens. Or ought to be happening.
    - But really it should be happening everywhere. Through all of us!

So let's begin with the purpose of Parenting.

- In raising our Children: What are we trying to achieve? What is the GOAL?
  - The purpose of Parenting is the same as the Mission of the Church
    - To make disciples of Jesus
    - This is the goal of parenting

Now notice, I did not say for them to be successful in the world's eyes.

- AKA going to the best College University. Being the best athlete. Being a part of the popular crowd. Consuming their schedules with busyness every day of the week. Hear my heart, not necessarily bad things.
  - God isn't as concerned with these things
    - In other words, they shouldn't be the primary focus.
    - And yet my fear is that even in the Church, we are seeing terrible statistics of Students after highschool, never stepping foot in Church again
  - God has entrusted YOU to train and teach your child to know and love God
  - Not give them a lukewarm Gospel.
    - Or modeling a lukewarm faith
      - And so parents, is your life worthy of imitation?
      - As the Apostle Paul says: **Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.**
        - We will talk more about this shortly, but:

Let's look at **Proverbs 2** **"My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God."**

Now the past few weeks, Bill and Steve did a great job discussing what the "fear the Lord" is.

- But I will say in this context, it means that the one whom we want our children to care most about pleasing is not you, or some other person. Or some psychological need to be liked by others. But God.

**Proverbs 9:10** says **"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight."**

A person can not be truly wise without fearing God.

- **A wise parent understands that their biggest responsibility is to raise children who know and love and follow Jesus.**
  - And that means having a Gospel Centered home.
  - **Proverbs 22:6** says **"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."**
  - This is probably the most famous verse on parenting on the entire book of proverbs

Some of you may be sitting here saying:

- “You know what “I totally messed it up the way my husband and I parented” or
- “I wish I would've known Jesus back then the way I know Him now”.
  - Let me just encourage you that God’s grace is far deeper than you can fathom.
  - More than you can imagine.
  - As long as you have breath in your lungs it’s not too late.
  
- Let me also encourage you that you can not change a person's heart:
  - Some of you might be sitting here convinced that you did everything in your will power to lead your kids to the Lord and yet they still rejected Him.
  - Again, let me encourage you, you are not the deciding factor in whether or not your child will know the Lord.
  - That is between them and the Lord

But with that being said...

**And so our parenting needs to be saturated in prayer.**

- Prayer that the Lord will give you wisdom and patience and love as we stumble along our successes and failures
- And that He would be tilling the soil in your child's hearts to cause the seeds that you planted for them to grow.
  - Parenting and discipleship is a LONG game.
  - It may be years before you see any sort of fruit.
  - Or see them have a hunger to know God more.

And so for now, we trust in prayer. And we trust in the sovereignty of God. Who loves them even more than you do.

So how do we do this. How do we work hard to teach our children?

- This may sound very cliché: But your children are sponges.
- They absorb what happens at home. Every single one of us is a homeschooler.
  - Like I said in the very beginning-
  - Whether or not you know this- you are discipling your child.
  - But what is it that your children are disciples of? Disciples of the world? Disciples of Jesus

**1st Component**

So the first component of a Gospel Centered Home is that you teach your children by example.

- Meaning it starts with you. Are you walking in wisdom?
  - Which remember that means the fear of the Lord is manifested in your faithful walk with Jesus.
  - Because if you're not, **you can not expect your kids to.**

Check out **Proverbs 20:7** **“The righteous who walks in his integrity blessed are his children after him!”**

**Integrity.** What do we say about that? What is integrity?

- That it's all about what we do when no one's looking?
- In this case absolutely not.
  - Because when you are a parent, there are little eyes looking at you.
  - Observing, processing & learning everything you do. From the kind of person you are towards your wife/your husband, towards strangers.
  - How you respond when things don't go your way.
  - Gossiping about others in front of your Children..

- Let me ask you something:

- **Are your Children seeing parents whose lives reflect what they confess with their lips on Sunday mornings?**

- Because if your faith isn't genuine and being modeled at home, you can't expect your children to know Christ.

- And so do you have healthy rhythms at home?
- Is the Lord a topic of discussion in your home?
- Are you modeling prayer to your kids?
- What about diving in the Word of God with them?
- Or do your kids see you constantly scrolling through your phone
  - Constantly listening to Mainstream Media spewing out hatred/division & lies.
  - Do they see you going to the Word of God or listening to what the world says

**Now hear my heart- Parents, we don't do this, to check the box...**

**While it's good to do what is right, it's better to DELIGHT in doing what's right.**

- That's because if you are going through the motions, then you are convinced that joy is to be found elsewhere.

- And then all you are is a ticking time bomb.

- **So now here is the challenge. If a child is watching your example:**

- Does he see not just someone who is modeling obedience to God's commands
  - but a DELIGHT in their relationship with the Lord.
- And the reason this is so hard, is the only way to do this, is for you to have an authentic relationship with Jesus.
  - You can't fake it at home. Not for long. Everything is amplified there.

I could be a ball of frustration, anger, bitterness and laziness.

- And then walk into a room at Church and be a complete hypocrite when I only have to be with you in a short amount of time.
  - But at home, forget about it.
  - People you live with, see who you really are.
  - They see the good, the bad and the ugly.

And so the only way to really lead them by example is by authentically being the person you are leading them to be.

- And so, if you want that for them, it must be true for you.

A guy named Lee that I met shared something with me back in March and said "Christian, you can't attain what you don't possess."

- There is so much truth in that simple statement.
- So if you are taking notes "You can't attain what you don't possess"

As the Student Pastor here at Revolve, I can not stress the importance of faithfully pouring into your Children.

- Going to the Word of God with them and asking the Lord for wisdom in every area of their lives.
- Having open communication with struggles, anxiety, relationships, whatever the case may be.
  - Because the world is CONSTANTLY shouting lies to them.
  - Notice I did not say whispering. Because it's now right in our faces.
  - Right on our phones. On our TV screens.

- Are you standing idle? Or are you fighting against it?
  - Because I believe Satan absolutely wants to deceive and devour your children.
  - You might be thinking: that sounds a little intense.

Look at **1 Peter 5:8** **“Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.**

- Parents, are you sober minded and being watchful over your kids whom God has entrusted you to care for.
  - That doesn't mean breathe down their neck every hour of every day.
  - But hear me out on this:
    - Satan wants you to believe that your kids would never entertain pornography, use drugs, alcohol, get in fights.

You see secular Music, Social Media, cell phones, YouTube, our culture are programming your children.

- And that is why God has commanded us to rise up.
- Commanded us to point our children to Jesus.
  - Because if they are constantly consuming things of this world.
  - They will not bear fruit in Christ.

Did you know what Jesus prayed right before he was captured and led to the cross. Not just unity with all believers.

BUT he says this is **John 17:15** **“I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.”**

Jesus knows that Satan is looking to devour us.

Parents, are you watchful and standing guard?

### **Teaching through discipline**

Teaching through discipline. Before you tell me “Don't tell me how to discipline my kids”-

- That's not my goal here
  - I simply want to take you through what scripture teaches on discipline.
  - Not what me or the Elders think.

Now discipline can be a nasty word.

- One of the reasons for that is that there can be many bad examples of discipline.
  - Heavy handed parents who physically hurt their children out of anger.
  - Punishment for breaking rules that were never clear in the first place.
  - Parents acting out of frustration because their Children don't always do what they want them to do.

But discipline is actually a good thing. And absolutely biblical.

- When we do it well, we are modeling how God is with us.
- **Proverbs 3:11** says **“My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline or be weary of his reproof, for the Lord reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.”**

And remember **Hebrews 12:11** clarifies discipline is how we KNOW that God loves us! **“For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”**

- When you love someone you do what is reasonable to correct them when they are walking in foolishness.
  - And it's because you realize how harmful foolishness will be for them!
  - Look at the **Proverbs 19:18** **“Discipline your son, for there is hope, do not set your heart on putting him to death.”**
  - Did you catch that at the end
  - Listen to what this is saying:
    - NOT DISCIPLINING your children can lead them to death.

Discipline does come in a lot of forms.

- It's wrong to think it comes in the form as punishment.
  - Whether it's walking them through how to reconcile when they have done wrong and hurt someone
  - Teaching them to be responsible for their own actions
  - Taking them through the Word of God on what it means to be humble and not prideful.
    - Again, it's not taking things away or punishing them for an extended period of time.
    - **Parental discipline is done out of love which ultimately is meant to point your Children to Jesus.**

So let's recap. In order to have a Gospel Centered home according to Proverbs:

- We discussed: Teaching them by example and by discipline.



And last but not least: **LEGALISM**

- We are trying to raise little disciples. Not little pharisees.
  - We are missing the mark if what we communicate to our kids is LEGALISM.
  - That the path to happiness is rule keeping and moral performance.
  - The goal is to build children up into faithful followers of Jesus who DELIGHT to please the Lord.

LEGALISM is not going to get us to that finish line.

- One thing we should NOT be communicating to our kids is that : We are perfect.
  - Do you say sorry to your kids?
  - Do you ask for their forgiveness? Are you modeling humility?
    - There are times where I need to get on my knees and be at eye level and apologize to my boys for yelling at them for their room being messy.
    - And tell them “There’s no excuse for my anger. I asked Jesus to forgive me. Would you forgive me?”
    - Man that goes such a long way. And what an impact that will make

When your kids see that you are weak and fail at times, and that you are in need of a Savior, it will defeat a legalist mindset.

- Another way to defeat a legalist mindset is for our kids to understand that they need to wrestle through their own salvation.
- That they didn’t inherit salvation by growing up in a Christian home
  - Just because they may attend Church every Sunday
  - Or serve, or attend Student Ministry or even be baptized,
  - It does not mean salvation

In the book of Genesis we see that we have inherited Adam's sin.

- No matter how good we think our kids may be, they are in desperate need of a savior.
  - A biblical response to the Gospel is what leads us to salvation.
  - And we see this throughout the New Testament.
    - Repenting of our sin and placing our faith in Christ alone.
- I talk with many parents here in this room.
- Some where your kids are already moved out and still may not know the Lord.
  - And again I want to encourage you, that you are not meant to carry that guilt & shame. What Jesus did on the cross is enough.

- I want to encourage you to read through the book of proverbs, and pray through some of these passages that God is putting in front of you.
  - And to the young parents in this room, God has entrusted your children to you to love them, lead them, and disciple them.
    - And most importantly point them to our Savior Jesus.
    - It is the greatest calling you have on your life.