

# THE GOAL OF PARENTING

Parent and Child Relationships

August 2, 2015

# Review

- ▣ Psychology is unable to describe who man is, to diagnose his problem and to give him hope.
- ▣ The Scripture is sufficient to answer the spiritual problems of man.
- ▣ What questions do you have so far?

# The Context of Parenting

- ▣ Parents are painfully aware of their own shortcomings. A brief survey of the proper context will help them to aim for the right goals.
- ▣ Genesis 1:27-28 establish three relationships:
  - “In the image of God” – This phrase has many implications, one of which is man’s relationship to God.
  - “Male and female...God blessed them” – Man and woman have a God-given relationship.
  - “Be fruitful and multiply” – Married couples will bring forth children.

# In the Image of God

- ▣ Proverbs 1:7 – Fearing the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.
- ▣ Isaiah 59:2, Ephesians 2:4 – Our sins separate us from God and leave us spiritually dead.
- ▣ Philippians 3:7-10 – Knowing Christ through forgiveness is worth everything.
- ▣ Matthew 23:16, 17, 19 – Those who do not humble themselves before the Lord are “blind guides” of others.

# Marriage

- ▣ Ephesians 5:22-33, Malachi 2:14 – Marriage that is a loving commitment of a man to a woman (and vice versa) that finds its highest expression in the imitation of Christ.
- ▣ Genesis 2:18 – Husband and wife complement each other. That is to say that the gender roles God made in creation (Genesis 1:27) give meaning to marriage roles.
- ▣ Genesis 2:24 – Marriage constitutes the beginning of a new household.

# Purposes of Marriage

1. To glorify God by further reflecting His image (Genesis 1:27)
2. To exemplify Christ's sacrificial love (Ephesians 5:25)
3. To demonstrate the submission that the Lord deserves (Ephesians 5:22)
4. To support each other in their complementary dependence (Genesis 2:18; 1 Corinthians 11:11-12)
5. To take up each other's concerns (Genesis 2:24)
6. To delight each other with their companionship (Proverbs 5:19; 1 Corinthians 7:3-4)
7. To produce children (Genesis 1:28)
8. To rule over the earth (Genesis 1:28)

# Be Fruitful and Multiply

- ▣ Genesis 1:28 – God “blessed them.” His blessing might involve certain patterns of obedience, but this is first and foremost a Divinely-given blessing.
- ▣ Psalm 127:3-5 – Procreation is a blessing – a happy capacity.
  - We are not surprised that many cultures have fostered a resentment towards it, because it is an opportunity to resent God.
- ▣ Procreation is given within the context of marriage (cf. Deuteronomy 22:20-21).
- ▣ 1 Corinthians 7:14 – Even the presence of only one believing spouse greatly improves the spiritual care of the children.

# Who is Responsible for Parenting?

- ▣ Ephesians 6:4 – God assigns the role specifically to fathers as heads of the household.
  - Proverbs 1:8 – It is understood that the mother will have a large and significant part in the childrearing process. This does not undermine the husband's authority, but complements it.
- ▣ Romans 13:4, 1 Timothy 2:2 – Civil authorities are charged with keeping peace, rewarding doers of good and punishing doers of evil. They are not charged with spiritual care.
- ▣ 1 Peter 5:2-3, 2 Timothy 4:5 – Church elders are charged with the spiritual care of believers and the evangelization of the lost. While this naturally leads to a spiritual impact on children, it still falls to the family to provide the primary care for child (e.g. 1 Timothy 5:8).

# What is Parenting?

- ▣ OBEDIENCE: Parenting is an act of submission to God's authority (Genesis 18:19, etc.)
- ▣ BY WHOM: by parents (cf. reciprocal command in Exodus 20:12)
- ▣ ACTION: as they shepherd (Deuteronomy 6:5-7)
- ▣ OBJECT: their children (Proverbs 10:1)
- ▣ GOAL: in hopes that the children would live lives that honor the Lord (Ephesians 6:4).

# Lesser Goals in Parenting

## ▣ Self-actualization

- “We never knew that he was good at the arts until we let him choose his own homeschooling curriculum.”
- “He was born as a woman, but he has chosen his own path.”

## ▣ Biblical Perspective

- Psalm 139:13-14 – God does individually created each person, so each one does have various traits.
- Romans 12:1-2 – Believers, whose minds are being transformed in God’s image. Thus, they do not carry out their own will, but in each situation they test the options to determine God’s will.

# Lesser Goals in Parenting

- ▣ Happiness/Pain-free life
  - “I wanted to send him to tutoring after school, but he wasn’t happy with that.”
  - “I hope you guys have a great time on the field trip/missions trip. I would send Suzy, but I think she’ll be more comfortable at home.”
- ▣ Biblical Perspective
  - 2 Timothy 3:12 – Suffering is promised to Christians.
  - Genesis 3:16-19 – Our sin has brought hardship to life.
  - Matthew 5:3-12 – True happiness comes from spiritual realities.
  - Ecclesiastes 11:8-10, 12:13-14 – Temporal things can be enjoyed, if they are savored in light of God’s judgment.

# Lesser Goals in Parenting

- ▣ Easy lives for parents
  - “You make things so hard for me!”
  - “I can’t take you anywhere.”
  - “I should never have had children!”
  - “I can’t take him out in public. It’s so embarrassing!”
- ▣ Biblical Perspective
  - Ephesians 6:1 – We affirm that children SHOULD obey their parents.
  - Galatians 5:19-21 – We expect that children, who start out as unbelievers, will practice the deeds of the flesh. That is why parents must evangelize their children.
  - Philippians 2:1-8 – We view ourselves as servants. Thus, we do not expect an easy life when preferring others.

# Lesser Goals in Parenting

- ▣ Academically successful
  - “You’ve got to stay in school.”
  - “No, you can’t go on that mission trip / get a full-time job / get married; you’ve got to finish school!”
  - “What will you come to in life if you don’t make honor roll?”
- ▣ Biblical perspective
  - Mark 12:29-30 – We should love the Lord with our mind.
  - Idolizing education can often be
    - ▣ Proud – 2 Corinthians 3:5
    - ▣ Man-pleasing – Galatians 1:10
    - ▣ Fearful – Philippians 4:6-7

# Lesser Goals in Parenting

- ▣ Well-behaved
  - “She’s a good kid.”
  - “Were you a good boy today in class?”
  - “He would never do anything like that.”
- ▣ Biblical Perspective
  - Matthew 12:34 – We expect that wicked hearts will produce wicked words and deeds.
  - Matthew 23:25-28 – We seek change in the heart (i.e. salvation) before expecting lasting change on the outside.
  - Titus 2:11-13 – We teach believing children how to say “no” to ungodliness.
  - Proverbs 1:8-19, 13:15 – We warn our children of the evils and hardships of sin, even when they are still unbelievers.

# Lesser Goals in Parenting

## ▣ Salvation

- “All my children are believers. How about yours?”
- “It’s so sad that he died young and that he was wandering from the Lord, but I remember leading him in a prayer of faith years ago.”

## ▣ Biblical Perspective

- Matthew 16:26 – Salvation is tremendously important!
- Hebrews 5:11-14 – Believers should grow in relation to the Word and righteousness.
- Matthew 28:20 – Christ commissioned believers to teach obedience to all that He commanded.
- 1 Corinthians 10:31 – God wants glory from believers in everything.

# Your Questions

