

Missio Dei Fellowship exists to glorify God by delighting in Him and making Him known through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Drama of Parenting— Foundations

Selected Passages

PowerPoint Presentation: None

Keywords: Parenting, Children, Family

SermonAudio blurb:

I. Introduction.

- A. Last week I introduced the topic of parenting by taking us through the first 12 verses of Proverbs 3.
 - 1. We saw 6 blessings that come to children who heed the instruction and guidance of wise and godly parents.
 - 2. Note that last part of the sentence “instruction and guidance of wise and godly parents.” This is important to embrace whole-heartedly by each person here.
 - 3. The goal of parenting is not to keep your children from harm. It is not to send them out of the house unencumbered through foolish living.
 - 4. The goal of parenting is to raise godly children who become godly men and women and who in turn do it all over again. And that takes a lot of work and thinking and consistent action and prayer.
- B. Today we enter into the formal part of this series as we consider the drama of parenting.
 - 1. Remind them of Ephesians 1:18-23 with 3:8-10.
 - 2. Spiritual warfare, battling and defeating demons, having moments in our lives like Elijah did on Mt. Carmel are the things we like to think about.
 - 3. And God has invited us onto the stage to be a part of this grand event of His — but not as it is often understood. We proclaim the victory of God to the demonic world in the living out of the mundane.
 - 4. As we live lives that pursue the simple, boring things of life in a way that was intended by God. As we reform and redeem activities and relationships in light of the gospel, that is our calling.
 - 5. And one key part of this is the family. How you view marriage, your spouse, children’s relationship with the parents and how you parent are all aspects of the parts we play in God’s drama.

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- C. Today I want to help you understand the foundational theology related to families and parenting. From there we will look at many practical aspects on parenting. But those can't be understood without sound theology.

II. _____ Foundational Truths for The Family

- A. The family finds its roots in the Godhead.
1. Father-Son.
 - a. Within the Godhead we see the unique relationship of the Father and the Son.
 - b. Twice in the gospels we have God audibly referring to Jesus as His beloved son (Matthew 3:17; 17:5).
 - c. When Jesus was 12 He was in the Temple, which He called "His Father's house" (Luke 2:49).
 - d. The fact that Jesus consistently spoke of God as "His Father" was something shocking and even blasphemous. "For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God." (John 5:18)
 2. We also are to see God as our Father. As Paul says in Ephesians 3:14-15. . .
 3. One of the key titles that Jesus possesses is that of "Son of God."
 - a. It is worthwhile to note in Acts 9:20 that one of the first messages Paul ever preaches is that Jesus "is the Son of God." Why?
 - b. Romans 1:1-4 helps us there, especially 3-4.
 - (1) "Concerning His Son...." is grammatically connected to "He promised" in verse 2. "He promised" is grammatically connected to "the gospel of God" in verse 1.
 - (2) In other words, the gospel of God, that gospel that was spoken of throughout the Old Testament, has one key point to it....it is all about God's Son.
 - (3) Notice the end of verse 4, for there we see it all summed up in the phrase, "Jesus Christ our Lord." This gospel is about God's Son (which means it is really about God) and God's Son is Jesus the Messiah, who is our Lord.

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- (4) In fact, in these two verses are several titles of Jesus: Son of God, Seed of David, Messiah, and Lord. And all of them are filled with meaning in the OT.
 - (5) Jesus was not sent into the world to become the Son, but as the Son he was sent into the world.
 - (6) Yet, at the same time this Sonship evolved.
 - (a) When he came into the world he came from the line of David, and this was the royal line, the line from which the Messiah was to come. In 2 Samuel the future king and messiah was called the son of God.
 - (b) Israel was known as God's Son in the OT. If you wished to be part of God's 'family' you needed to become part of Israel. You had to become a Jew.
 - (c) And out of Israel was One who was to arise as the one True Son.
 - (d) And when that person did arise as Son, then sonship did not happen by becoming a Jew but instead, it happened by being rightly related to the True Son.
4. Interesting that the two most intimate relationships in creation are used by God to model the relationship in the Godhead and the relationship of us to Him both as Bride and as Adopted Children.
 5. Fathers can learn much about what it means to be a father by knowing God well for He is the perfect, eternal Father.
 - a. A wise father is one who makes pursuing God his primary purpose in life.
 - b. In turn, he then models what he learns of God to his children.
 - c. Consider the incredible love and care He shows to His children. How He lavishes us with grace. He is concerned about our well-being. He observes us closely. He is incredibly patient with our failings.
 - d. But also how our heavenly Father is not content to just leave us as we are.
 - (1) Romans 8:29.
 - (2) Ephesians 5:1.

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- (3) We are being changed from the inside out through the work of the Holy Spirit. So too a good father is working in the lives of his children to change them and develop them in a manner that honors God.
 - (4) Psalm 103:13 but read the whole Psalm.
 - (5) Luke 11:13.
- B. The family, like marriage, is a creation of God (Genesis 1:27-28 with 2:7, 18-25).
1. Like marriage, we can't define "family" any way we like and be consistent with God's design.
 2. The Christian does well as a light to this world when he lifts up and honors the family unit as something holy and something unique.
 3. The presence of a child does not make a couple into a family. The family begins with the advent of a new household via marriage.
 - a. This brings out challenges that will be touched on later.
 - b. But the biblical method of creating a family is that a man and woman marry — the creation of a new household.
 - c. They extend that family through the bearing and raising of children. But when the children leave the family is not gone.
 - d. If children were the primary answer to Adam's loneliness then God could have created a few children rather than a wife.
 4. It is an important point to note that the immediately after creating a suitable helper and companion for Adam that God commands child-bearing (1:28).
 - a. This command is reiterated after the Flood in Genesis 9:7.
 - b. This gives us a simple reality that each couple here should give pause to think about.
 - (1) Marriages which intentionally avoid children are not in accordance to the command of God.
 - (2) There are some who simply cannot have children due to some physical issue or because they never marry. This is not in view here. It is the mind set that sees the child as a burden or an intrusion into the life of the couple that is wrong.

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- (3) The Church is a place where we can rejoice and delight in child-bearing.
 - c. Since God is the one who created the family it is reasonable for us to think that God has purposes for doing so.
 - (1) First, to fill the earth. Remember that the Garden was a unique place created by God for the couple. From there they were to go into the world and essentially tame it.
 - (2) Second, to be multiple image-bearers before creation (gen 1:26-27).
 - (a) A comment about the false idea of over-population.
 - (b) “If it comes down to the numbers the entire world’s population can fit in Texas. This has been said many times and when it comes down to basic math, it is true. Texas is 268,581 Square miles, if some amazing engineer were to design the father of all complexes; basically a China housing unit on steroids is the only thing that would work. The building would cover the entire state of Texas. Rivers, ponds, and creeks included; literally every square inch of Texas would be engulfed in this building. There would be one thousand square feet per person.”
(<http://factslist.net/2013/03/the-entire-world-population-can-sink-into-the-state-of-texas/> viewed March 12, 2016)
 - (c) And this is what occurs in procreation, the creating of another image-bearer, the pinnacle of God’s creative work.
 - (d) It is interesting to note how God, in a sense, got the ball rolling and then delegated these tasks to Adam and Eve.
- C. Sin affects the family.
 - 1. In Genesis 3 sin entered the world and with it the family was affected in every possible way.
 - 2. In 4:1 we see the fulness of that right away.
 - 3. In chapter five a key term dominates the chapter.

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4. In chapter 6:5 the downfall of humanity is at the brink apart from the gracious intervention of God.
 5. In the household of Abraham we see folly and sin in his life and Sarah's.
 6. In the household of Isaac there was sin, the folly of Isaac, Rebekah, Esau and Jacob is sad.
 7. In the household of Jacob there was sin as we watch the heads of the tribes of Israel rape, murder, lie and manipulate.
 8. You move into the nation of Israel and after being wonderfully redeemed out of Egypt immediately display an unthankful, bitter, grumbling and rebellious spirit.
 9. The reality of entering the promised land of Israel is sadly described in Judges that everyone did what was right in their own eyes.
 10. The rise of the Kings did not fix it either. Saul turned into a evil king who rebelled against God and then sought to murder God's choice for a new king in David. David was a great king and a great sinner. He murdered and committed adultery.
 11. And we could go on and on in this. Families are brought into existence, and sin spreads.
 12. As you think about your household perhaps godliness is not the first thing that enters your mind; rather it is sin and failure.
 - a. Parenting is something you get one shot at and it doesn't always turn out well. Sin dwells in the hearts of the parents and the children, making for a difficult reality.
 - b. But I can only encourage you to not be discouraged. Our Lord reigns. He has broken the power of sin. He has called us to trust Him and to follow Him.
 - c. And as you do you will find that God is able to redeem what you thought could never be redeemed.
 - d. Part of the glory of the gospel is how God steps into the lives of a household and remakes it into images of His gospel truth.
- D. The biblical image of the family brings us into contact with the gospel.
1. Through the family and the spread of humanity the plan of redemption would be fulfilled (Genesis 3:15 and 12:1-3).

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2. The True Son is Jesus Christ our Lord.
 - a. But through faith we not merely forgiven of our sin and given life; but we are adopted into the very family of God.
 - b. Now we can call God “our Father.”
- E. The family is a picture of the Church.
 1. 1 Peter 4:17.
 2. How do we become the household of God? Through Jesus Christ. Ephesians 2:11-20.
 3. The New Testament is replete with references to fellow Christians as brothers and sisters in Christ.
 - a. Some are blessed with being raised in a happy, God-fearing home. But many are not.
 - b. But in the Church there is to be that welcoming and putting up with one another as brothers and sisters. It is not surprising that we are commanded to “be devoted to one another in brotherly love” (Romans 16:1)
 - c. Think about elders in 1 Timothy 3:4-5.
 - d. 1 Timothy 5:1-2.
 4. Marriage is momentary. At death it ends and is not part of eternity. But being brothers and sisters is something that never ends.
 - a. In Revelation 22 we are still seen as the Bride of Christ and God the Father is still our Father.
 - b. John 14:2-3.
 - c. Look around beloved, for these are your true family.

III. Conclusion.

- A. Families in the church are a good thing. They are a micro-expression of the greater, truer family of God we are part of in Christ.
- B. Application for older people.
 1. How do you view the little ones in the church? How do they view you? Not just your grandchildren, but all of the little ones?
 2. Are you reaching out to them, encouraging their parents and speaking kind words to the children themselves?

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3. How are you thinking about pouring what God has taught you into their little hearts?
 4. Have you considered that as a key role for you? Have you asked yourself why you are not volunteering for nursery or SS?
- C. To singles.
1. How do you view the families in the church? Are they something strange or exotic?
 2. Consider how you spend your time and how you observe the families here. You are being given a reminder of the privileges of being in the household of God. Each time you watch parents correct a child you should be reminded of the way your Father in heaven corrects you.
 3. Families, when was the last time you invited a single person over to spend time with you? Have you thought about your role in bringing singles into the life of the family?
- D. Beloved, consider how the family is under attack in our nation.
1. This is not something surprising for the family is a key example of the gospel. Therefore Satan will seek to obscure that image in every way.
 2. But understand that as our nation continues to slide into all levels of folly and sin the Christian family becomes more and more a light of the gospel.
 3. This is one of the simplest ways for you to be missional, by inviting unbelievers into your homes and merely living out your life before them in that context.
 4. There is an incredible message portrayed when they watch a husband and wife interact in a godly way. Or as they see your delight in your children and how you raise them to fear God. How they see you open your home in hospitality. All of this is the seed bed of evangelism.

Community Group Questions

- What aspect of parenthood and the family are you most interested in learning?
- What was your experience in growing up in a family? How does those experiences help or hinder you now?

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- Try to come up with various applications to the fact that your real family is the Church. Example being, we need to be quick to forgive one another. Ask yourselves if your behavior toward the church is such that it shows that you see one another as family.