

We continue in our series:



“Proverbs for the Marriage and Family.” Last week we saw the “Role of Parents.” Today’s message: “The Role of Children.” Next week “Divorce, Remarriage and Singleness.” Take a look at the screens and see this picture with me. Who is that a depiction of?



Joseph and Mary and Jesus. Look closely at that depiction. I looked long and hard to find that image... Why? Because it depicts Joseph and Mary as teenagers and Bible scholars tell us that’s likely what they were...late teenagers, and for Joseph...at most, maybe 20. Now, for me...the question comes to mind: “What made Joseph and Mary who they were...to be so young...and yet, be chosen by God to raise His Son?”

You might say, "Well, it was by the grace of God." I would definitely agree...but, do you think that Joseph and Mary's parents might have been used by God to have a little something to do with it? Did God possibly use Joseph and Mary's parents to shape, mold and train them into the young adults they were? I would say, "Most definitely, yes." I would go so far as to say that the parents of Joseph and Mary had godly expectations of their children and the role that they were to have in their homes.

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And, as parents who were following God, this was expected. Remember from last week:

**Malachi 2:15a**

**15 Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union?<sup>[a]</sup> And what was the one God<sup>[a]</sup> seeking?<sup>[b]</sup> Godly offspring.**

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You see, Hebrew families saw "godly childrearing" as their responsibility from God. And thus, they were serious about it. And you think about some of the great heroes of the faith like: David...a shepherd boy, a teenager, who fought the giant Goliath, raised by Jesse in a godly home; Daniel, a teenager who refused to bow to a pagan idol...he too, was raised in a godly home with great expectations. And how about: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, they did the same. Hebrew children...raised strong in Hebrew homes. And then, we return to Jesus?



How was He trained, from a babe? Remember, by the time He turned 12, He was locked in. Remember they found Him in the Temple with the teachers...





love that picture. He said, “Didn’t you know I had to be about my Father’s business,” and ultimately, Luke 2 tells us:

**Luke 2:51-52**

**<sup>51</sup> And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart. <sup>52</sup> And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature<sup>[i]</sup> and in favor with God and man.**

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He grew in favor with God and man... Do you know what that means? It meant that He was known not only to God as a wise person...but, also to man...to people... People watched Him grow and knew that He was submissive and wise.

Hey, how are your kids seen in the community? Are they growing in favor with God and man? You see, there were expectations in Hebrew homes...and there should be in our homes...because children have roles to play in our homes...just as there are roles to play for fathers and mothers, there are roles to be played by the children. Look now at this amazing verse:

**Proverbs 20:11**

**<sup>11</sup> Even a child makes himself known by his acts, by whether his conduct is pure and upright.**

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And that verse can also be translated that they can fake it...and it’s the job of the parent to snuff this out. Let’s see if we can do that. Church family, there are two basic commands given to children in Scripture. Those commands:

1. **Obey** their father and mother
  2. **Honor** their father and mother
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**Ephesians 6:1-4**

**<sup>1</sup> Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. <sup>2</sup> “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), <sup>3</sup> “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.” <sup>4</sup> Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.**

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Can I be blunt, and I’ve thought a lot about this, and sadly I believe it’s true: Many parents today are obeying their children instead of the other way around. Parents are afraid of their kids. I watch this happen all the time. The 3-year-old who tells their 30 or 35-year-old parent what to do. So, parents out of fear of hurting their kids’ feelings do what they’re kids’ want. And I get it...we’ve been told by all the experts that we don’t want to hurt our children’s self-esteem, so everyone gets a participation

trophy...no one ever loses... Brothers and sisters...that's not real life and we're not training our kids for reality; but instead, for some sort of utopian fantasy.

Mom and dad, listen carefully, children need parents not pals. It's not your job to be their best friend. Now hear me...I'm not saying you can't be their friend, or that it's wrong for them to like you...I'm simply saying there are times you can't be their friend...because they will want you to acquiesce to their wishes and you can't always do that.

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Did you know the word "parent" in Latin...in "loco dei," means: "in the place of God." Meaning...if they won't honor and obey you, they're likely not going to honor and obey God. And so, we're back to our children honoring and obeying. And I want to show you know what I've come up with...really five (5) general expectations we should have for our children in our homes.

**Children Who Obey and Honor Their Parents Should:**

1. **Be Submissive**
  2. **Be Respectful**
  3. **Work Hard / Be Productive**
  4. **Be Expected to Learn**
  5. **Understand Their Purpose**
- 

Let's start with #1...

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We read earlier from Luke 2...

**Luke 2:51a**

**<sup>51</sup> And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them.**

Jesus is our example in all stages of life...and we see that He was submissive to His parents and I would argue that submission to one's parents is the chief way that a child can honor and obey his/her parents. Mom and Dad...do you expect your children to submit to your authority? If you hesitate to answer that question, then you might have a problem.

And the truth is...that problem might have been passed down to you...there could have been dysfunction in your home growing up and that's led to dysfunction in your home today. Unfortunately, one reason parents struggle to require submission in their homes is because they didn't grow up seeing that modeled in their home as a child. Many people grew up in homes that had two modes: anger and passivity.

Growing up in this kind of home you either had a parent hollering at you or ignoring you. But I'm here to tell you that dysfunction doesn't have to dominate your home today. The first step is to recognize and the second step is to...GUESS WHAT...submitting to our Heavenly Father. After all, Jesus...once again, being our example, did exactly that in the Garden of Gethsemane...He submitted to His Father.

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Do you need to submit? Do you need to honor and obey your Heavenly Father in some way? You know, your children will likely never be any more committed to the Lord than you are. Submission...parents should expect it...because God does.



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Now as we've just talked about being submissive and now looking at the expectation of being respectful...I'll cover much greater detail regarding submission and respect in the two upcoming messages on discipline in the home. But, for now...it's important to understand that one of the roles of children in the home is to be respectful to their parents.

Mom and Dad, your child should be taught to be respectful and that necessitates the teaching of manners. They should be taught to be thankful and grateful for the food they eat...the clothes they wear and the roof over their head. They are to be taught to thank God for those things. They should be taught to say: "yes ma'am, no ma'am, yes sir, no sir." And this is almost an anomaly in our society today. Most kids when spoken to say, "Yeah or Huh." Many kids haven't been taught to look an adult in the eye when they're being spoken to; instead, they look at down, most likely screen...unfortunately many children and young people can't communicate unless it's with a text message.

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Paul told Timothy, who was a young man at the time, this:

### **1 Timothy 4:12**

**<sup>12</sup> Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.**

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Church, I would argue that those five areas show signs of respect. See them:

## **Children Are To Be Respectful in Their:**

- **Speech**
  - **Conduct**
  - **Love**
  - **Faith**
  - **Purity**
- 

Purity... Now, this needs to be said...purity or the lack thereof has become a disaster in our society...and sadly, within the church. Our idea of purity and our standards for purity continue to drop. I remember in 1974 a show called: The Sonny and Cher Show.



It was a live show... One night, Cher came out with a full-length sequin dress on that had a hole for her belly button to show. The rating agencies went nuts and she made the CBS Evening News the next evening with Walter Cronkite. There was a collective gasp across the nation!

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Church...I'm not even sure what to say...we show and expose way too much. Please, please have standards for purity in your home, and we'll talk more about all of this in an upcoming message on Dating. For now...see this:

**Ephesians 5:3**

**But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.**

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Did you know that your home is an economy? It is. You have an economy in your home. In my home, we have the Brown Economy...meaning there should be a goal for those who are able to be producers in that home...not just consumers. Now of course, we all start out as babies and thus, we're all consumers...but, as children age...they need to be taught and trained how to be productive in your home.

So, let me ask you a question: Do you expect your children to do chores? You say, "They're not old enough." Well, did you know that you can teach a two-year-old how to fold washcloths? You can. It's just making squares. Mom and Dad, we need to build an expectation in their minds and then affirm and encourage our children...even if they don't do something perfectly...affirm them trying...and by doing so, that will raise in them a desire for your continued affirmation and encouragement. They'll not only learn to do the chores...they'll also feel affirmed as being productive in their own home. Here's the truth: children rise to our level of expectations.

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You see, there are really only two kinds of people...givers and takers, or we could say: producers and consumers. What are you raising? **Most likely you're raising what you are.** When is the last

time you did something for someone for nothing in return? That's when you're truly a giver. I'm so thankful for those who give of their time and energy to serve in the church. I thanked you last week, but I want to reiterate our thanks to you for giving!



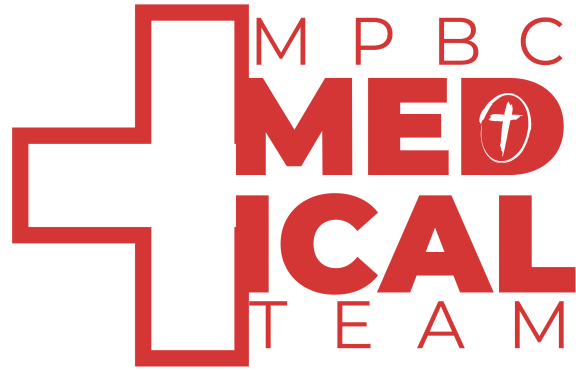
Thank you for supporting the ministry of the church both General and for future needs: LAL... I told you last week...we need more parking...so we're raising money to build a parking lot attached to the Medical Center parking lot...we also need to make more room in here and we're looking for a way to move the coffee outside between the buildings. Thank you for helping. If you're being blessed here...would you give?

Something else...speaking of giving...is would you give your time to the:



**Parking Team**: we need to beef up our team...we could use another 10 folks to help. 18 years of age or over is preferable. SERVE EVERY 5 WKS. Same with Medical...





**Medical Team:** if anyone is out...we're running lean. We need 2-3 more EMS or Nurse certified volunteers. Sign-up online or via the App, under the "Get Involved" tab. Thank you!

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So, as grateful as I am for our church for all of you who serve and give your time...by and large, as a society, we're raising a nation of people who don't want to work. They want a hand out. But, you know I had grandparents that bought everything with cash. If they didn't have the money for it, they didn't buy it. Today, we just ask: "What's the payment" and like the Federal government that's \$33 trillion dollars in debt...most Americans are drowning in debt.

I heard this story about a father who said to his sons: when you turn 12, I'm going to tell you the secret of life. Finally, the oldest boy turned 12 and he anxiously asked his father what was the secret of life. The father replied: secret of life is this: **The cow does not give milk.** The son said, "I don't understand." The father said: "Son, the cow does not give milk, you have to get up at 4 am and get get the milk. You have to get up, go to the field, walk through the corral, which is full of manure, get to the cow stall, tie the cow's tail, sit on a stool, place the bucket under the cow and milk the cow. And that my dear son is the secret of life...you've got to work to get the milk."

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Oh, that we could learn that in this nation. A nation which each subsequent generation only wants everything for free and unfortunately, we've got a government who, to keep the power...will mortgage this country's future on the backs of the children and grandchildren, because they're so selfish and greedy. No...we must raise children to work...to be part of a family economy and be productive.

And one other thing...when it comes to work...we've got to stop thinking that every one of our kids needs to get a college degree. Not all of our kids are "bent" to go to college... There are so many opportunities in the trades. Ask anyone in plumbing, electrical, HVAC, welding, brick and stone laying...they can't find enough workers. And if you have the gumption to work, within 3-5 years, you can start your own business and do very well and not be saddled with all that college debt. Times have changed...college isn't for everyone but every house in America relies on the trades! Now #4.

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I want to ask what may seem to be a strange question: “Mom and Dad do you expect your children to do hard things...things that don’t come easy (age-related of course)? Or, are you like a lot of parents who are carrying around a pillow, (if you will), so they can always provide their children a soft landing. In other words: you micro-manage their life...always bailing them out when times get tough. Are you doing that? If you are...you are stunting their growth and you are NOT expecting them to grow. You are keeping them from growing. **We all know: unless the muscle is put under pressure it can’t get stronger.** Yet, we have a lot of helicopter parents flying around trying to solve all of their kids’ problems...to swoop in and bail them out.

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Can I ask you: What made you the way you are? I imagine your character and integrity were forged in the furnace of hard times...when you had to trust the Lord to get you through.

A while back, one of my children was struggling with someone who was bullying them. They had never experienced anything quite like that before...it was all verbal...no foul language...no physical threats...just someone being a know-it-all and very condescending. Now, I could have swooped in and made a big scene...called in: “the powers that be” and handled it...but, I would have likely only made things worse and harder...because I would have effectively taken the knees out of my child, and would have had to continue to swoop in going forward. So, we worked through it and prayed through it and in the end...once the bully saw that my child was not going to take the bait...and that they weren’t going to win no matter what they did...(because my child chose to walk the second mile and turn the other cheek)...it all stopped. Was it hard? You better believe it...for my child and this parent. But, we trusted the Lord and walked by the principles. The principles we learned in Scripture.

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Mom and Dad, as we talk about learning...as we talk about expecting our children to learn, what about you? Are you continuing to learn how to be a better parent? You say, “You mean I’m supposed to do that?” Yes! Don’t they train you at work...continuing training... Been through any of those boring Safety Training meetings lately?

Can I be blunt...most parents don’t spend any time trying to become a better parent. They don’t read the Bible, which is most important, and they don’t read any books...all they read is what’s on their phones. Most people learn by memes on social media...those little things we share on social media. But I want to tell you something. Reading books is critical to becoming a better parent. And so often this has to do with what you do with that last 20 minutes of your day...how you go to bed.

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I want to encourage you to READ! READ! It will make you a better parent. Earlier this week, I walked over to the little bookshelf in mine and Pam’s bedroom and I jotted down the books on that shelf and the books on Pam’s little desk and by her nightstand and on my nightstand, and here they are, and BTW....this **list will be available on the sermon notes** on the App/website.

1. **“13 Things Mentally Strong Parents Don’t Do,” Amy Morin**
2. **“Family Driven Faith,” Voddie Baucham**
3. **“Sacred Parenting,” Gary Thomas**
4. **“The Screwtape Letters,” C.S. Lewis**
5. **“The Pursuit of God,” A.W. Tozer**
6. **“Battle for the American Mind,” Pete Hegseth**
7. **“Don’t Make Me Count to Three,” Ginger Hubbard**
8. **“Shepherding a Child’s Heart,” Tedd Tripp**
9. **“Lead Like Christ,” A.W. Tozer**
10. **“Parenting: From Surviving to Thriving,” Charles Swindoll**

11. "Awakening Wonder," Sally Clarkson
  12. "The Whole-Brain Child: 12 Revolutionary Strategies to Nurture Your Child's Developing Mind," Daniel J. Siegal
  13. "Live Not by Lies," Rod Dreher
  14. "A Parent's Guide to High-Functioning-Autism-Spectrum-Disorder," Sally Ozonoff
  15. "How to Break with Your Phone," Catherine Price
  16. "Letter to the American Church," Eric Metaxas
  17. "The Titus Ten, Foundations of Godly Manhood," J. Josh Smith
  18. "Women Counseling Women," Elise Fitzpatrick
  19. "Just Open the Door: A Study of Biblical Hospitality," Jen Schmidt
  20. "The Time-Saving Mom," Crystal Paine
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Feel overwhelmed? That's not my intention... And it's not my intention to make you think better of me and Pam. No, I tell you this to let you know that's about 3-years-worth of reading at night. My grandmother always said, "Readers become Leaders." And can you see how a person might grow as a parent reading these kinds of books? Can you put a value on this kind of knowledge? *And by the way...Pam and I don't necessarily agree with everything in all of these books...but, by and large, these books have made us better parents.*

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Mom and Dad, my point is: we need to be reading. We need to make good use of that 20 minutes before you drift off to sleep by investing yourself into good books. **And one other thing, if you don't read well, do Audible...or Libby**...through the public library...it's free...use these during that driving time...listen to books...be a learner! #5

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You know in our culture, everyone wants to have fun...and there's nothing wrong with having fun...but, is that why we exist? Is that why we're here? Do you know why we exist? It's for one person: Jesus. We exist for Jesus.

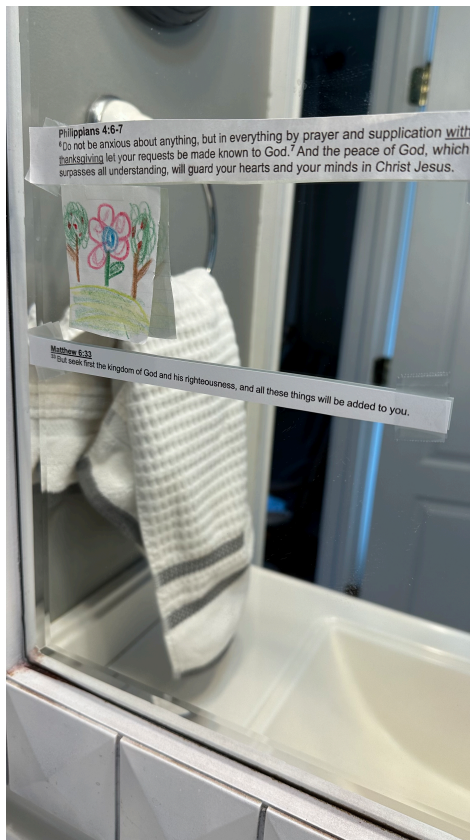
#### **Colossians 1:16**

**<sup>16</sup> For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.**

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We exist because of Jesus, and you and I have to get our brains wrapped around this thought: your life...your family, your kids, your home, your cars, your gifts, your abilities, they're all for Jesus, or at least they should be. Does this principle guide your home? What principle? Matthew 6:33. Have you posted Matthew 6:33 on your mirror yet?





This is my bathroom mirror and it's on my kid's mirror. That's Phil. 4:6-7 about not being anxious and my granddaughter, Evie's, little picture she drew for me.

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The ultimate purpose of man is to glorify God. We were created to bring Him glory, and that's much bigger purpose than just having fun.

You know, the word "fun" is not in the Bible... You say "Doesn't God believe in fun?" Sure, He does! But, as Christians, that's not the goal. Listen carefully now. **Who is fun for?** Me. Fun is pursued for me, for my enjoyment. But I want to tell you something that's better than fun: JOY! And you can have joy even when it isn't fun. You can have joy in a prison cell...singing to Jesus in the middle of the night, like Paul and Silas. You can have joy when everything around you is chaotic...you can have joy no matter what your circumstances if you see them in the light of glorifying Jesus.

Mom and dad, it's been said: "What we make a child love and desire is more important than what we make them learn." What are you making them love and desire? What do they crave? What are you cultivating in their heart? Is it to bring God glory? See the picture one last time:

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What an amazing couple. Joseph and Mary...taught and trained to the point, as teenagers to do did the will of the Father...raised to:

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Indeed, they did. May we follow their example.

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