

Practical Parenting

Truth: Biblical Pillars

- Gospel—God’s rescue story
- Sovereignty—His hand controls everything and he has an eternal plan
- Identity—Our new nature changes everything
- Sanctification—Becoming like Christ
- Stewardship—Children belong to God
- Dependency—Holy Spirit changes us
- Prayer—Parenting drives us to our knees
- Restoration—Sin is an invitation to draw near
 - Enemy uses mistakes to drive us to shame – instead run to the cross
- Ministry—Spouse, children, and the church
 - Marriage conflict increases with parenting

Truth: How Does God Parent Us?

- Authoritative
- Balancing Grace and Discipline
- Caring Tenderly
- Comforter
- Compassionate
- Consistent
- Leader
- Slow to Anger
- Teacher
- Unconditional Love
- Hosea 11:1-4
- Psalm 91:4
- Lamentations 3:22-23
- Ephesians 1:7-8, 2:4-5
- Hebrews 12:5-6, 11

Truth: Biblical Commands to Children

- Ephesians 6:1-3 & Exodus 20:12 – “Children obey your parents in the Lord.....”
- Colossians 3:20
- Proverbs 1:8 – “Hear, my son, your father’s instruction, don’t forsake mother’s teaching”
- Proverbs 13:1
- Proverbs 19:27 – “Cease to hear instruction....stray from the words of knowledge”

Truth: Biblical Commands to Parents

Indirect Commands:

- Love one another (John 13:34)
- Be kind and compassionate to one another (Ephesians 4:32)
- Forgive one another (Colossians 3:13)
- Be patient [longsuffering], bearing with one another in love (Ephesians 4:2)
- Clothe yourselves with humility towards one another (1 Peter 5:5)
- Edify (build up) one another (1 Thess. 5:11)
- Confess your sins to one another (James 5:16)
- Pray for one another (James 5:16)

Direct Commands:

- Ephesians 6:4 – “Father’s do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”
- Colossians 3:21 “Father’s do not exasperate your children, lest they become discouraged.”

List From Lou Priolo in “The Heart of Anger”

- Lack of marital harmony
- Establishing and maintaining a child-centered home
- Modeling sinful anger
- Habitually disciplining while angry
- Scolding
- Being inconsistent with discipline
- Having double standards
- Being legalistic
- Not admitting wrong and asking for forgiveness
- Constantly finding fault
- Parents reversing God-given roles
- Not listening to child’s opinion or taking his/her side of story seriously
- Comparing them to others
- Not making time “just to talk”
- Not praising or encouraging your child
- Failing to keep promises
- Chastening in front of others
- Not allowing enough freedom
- Allowing too much freedom
- Mocking your child
- Abusing them physically
- Ridiculing or name calling
- Unrealistic expectations
- Practicing favoritism
- Child training with worldly methods inconsistent with God’s word

Truth: Authority

Authority – Yielding Our Will:

- Our entire Christian life is lived under God’s authority
- As adults, sanctification consists of moments of yielding our will to the Lord’s will
- Teach our kids how to live under our authority
- Launch into adulthood living under God’s authority
- John 6:38
- Christ subjected himself to God
- “The realization of His intimate relationship with the Father contributed to His perfect dependence on Him.” –J.F. Strombeck, *Disciplined By Grace*
- Parental authority must include an intimate relationship

Authority in Parenting:

- Establish your role as the authority very early
- Obedience must be a high priority
- Biblical honor is expressed in respect and obedience
- Restrict a child’s appeal until obedience is established
- Be careful giving too many choices because a child perceives choices as gaining authority
- Interrupting is dishonoring
- Authority and obedience are critical during younger years

Grace

- *“Grace is the unmerited, abounding provision of the unrestrained operation of God’s infinite love, through Jesus Christ, on behalf of man.”*
- J.F. Strombeck, *Disciplined by Grace*
- Titus 2:11-12
- *“If God’s plan really is to make his invisible grace visible by sending parents of grace to give grace to children who desperately need grace, then I am called not just to preach that grace but to live and model it for my children every day.”*
“Instead of approaching [our kids] with self-righteous outrage, I moved toward them as a sinner in need of grace needing to confront a sinner in need of grace.”
Parenting: 14 Gospel Principles That Can Radically Change Your Family by Paul Tripp

Parenting for the Heart

Biblical References to the Heart:

- Proverbs 4:23 – “Guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.” (NIV)
- Luke 6:45 – “.....for the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.”
- Jeremiah 17:9 – “Heart is deceitful above all things beyond cure, who can understand it?”
- “Behavior is heart driven, therefore, correction, discipline and training – all parenting – must be addressed to the heart. The fundamental task of parenting is shepherding the hearts of your children.”
- Tedd Tripp, *Shepherding a Child’s Heart*

The Heart is the Target:

- Biblically, the heart is the core part of our will
- Use heart language as young as they can understand (~ age 3)
- Heart training is more time consuming than behavior modification

Training and Discipline

- Training – teaching good behavior
- Discipline – giving consequences for poor heart decisions, returning the child to fellowship with God and us

Training – Gumnazo Principle (*Heart of Anger* by Lou Priolo)

- Gumnazo (Greek) – to train, to exercise
 - English words - Gymnasium or Gymnastics
- Blacksmith apprentice
 - Telling
 - Showing
 - Doing it with me by your side
 - Correcting as needed
 - Doing independently
- Young babies can be trained by repetition
- Living Godly requires repetitive training
 - Speaking respectfully (tone, volume, facial expressions)
- Self-control requires exercise
- Proverbs 13:18, 19:18, 29:15, 8:11

- “Just as God disciplines us out of love, we have the responsibility to discipline our children as a demonstration of our love for them.”
 - FamilyLife, Homebuilders-Effective Discipline
- Punishment exacts a price, discipline returns to fellowship
- Jesus already received punishment, God’s wrath is satisfied through Christ
- Discipline is administering a consequence, motivated by love, with restoration as the result

When to Discipline (*Shepherding a Child’s Heart* – Tedd Tripp)

- Never discipline for childish things
 - Spilled milk
 - Accidents
- Directly disobeying a parent’s instructions
 - Defiance
- Never discipline out of anger – take a time out
- Discipline Procedure
 - Take a child to a private place
 - Clearly state what he has done or failed to do
 - Ensure the child has understood
 - Reminder that consequences are result of all our actions
 - Give the consequence
 - Review the good news of the gospel - forgiveness
 - Pray with the child

Worldly vs. Biblical Parenting

Nature of Mankind (Children Included)

Worldly:

- Children are inherently good
- Child is a blank slate, needs to develop right responses
- Children need to be taught how to properly regulate emotions and feelings

Biblical:

- Born with a sin nature
- Even after belief-we still carry our flesh
- Heart is deceitful (Jer 17:9)
- Romans 1-3
- Without God, we are lost in our own sin (Eph 2:1-3)

What Are We Aiming For?

Worldly:

- Fulfill self
- Be your best self
- Happy, confident, and independent children

Biblical:

- Glorify God (1 Cor 10:31)
- Dependency on God

Role of Authority:

Worldly:

- Parenting is collaboration
- Parents act as the coach
- Child is the co-authority

Biblical:

- God is our chief authority
- Parents steward their children
- Parental authority until child reaches adulthood
- Colossians 3:20, Ephesians 6:1, Commandment 5 (Ex 20:12)

Power to Change:

Worldly:

- Change power comes from within
- Parents are the coaches to teach and draw out the proper behaviors

Biblical:

- Change only happens by God's grace (Phil 2:12-13)
- Work of the Holy Spirit
- Word of God brings life and hope

Little Johnny Steals the Cookie:

* Adapted from The Not So Loving Side of Gentle Parenting by Justin Miller

- Mother and Father make their neighbor a meal for dinner that includes a plate of cookies
- Mother says to little Johnny, I need to go to my bedroom, do not touch the cookies while I am away
- Johnny opens the wrapper and takes a cookie
- Mom comes back and sees Johnny stole a cookie

Worldly

- Stealing cookie was from immature decision making
- Feelings related to taking the cookie – it's okay to want cookies
- Instead of taking a cookie, get a juice box because that is a better choice when mom/dad ask you not do something

Biblical

- Heart desired the cookie
- Sinned to meet that desire
- Grace of the gospel covers the sin
- Mom/Dad and God forgive you
- Pray and ask the Lord to help put our heart's desires in line with His desires
- Consequence for sin (not out of anger)
- Communicate love for Johnny

Next Steps:

Establish Family Rhythms:

- Family devotions – keep it simple and fun
- Family prayer
- Family meals
- One-on-one dates (even as simple as the hardware store)
- Scripture songs
- Transparency and humility regarding your own sin
- Time, effort, unplanned moments communicate what is important
- Technology detracts from relationships

Growing in the Knowledge of the Lord and in Community:

- Biblical Training Center (BTC) classes
 - Teaching that influences your thinking, actions, attitudes
 - Classroom discussion and relationship building
 - Note – Your kids can stay for two services
- Community Group
- Parent Summit in January 2027 (recordings from Jan 2026)
- Resources
 - BTC Class, “The Family—God’s Greenhouse for Transformation”
 - *Shepherding a Child’s Heart* by Tedd Tripp
 - *Grace Based Parenting* by Tim Kimmel
 - *Parenting* by Paul Tripp
 - *M is for Mama* by Abbie Halberstad (Instagram: @m.is.for.mama)
 - *Teach them Diligently* by Lou Priolo
 - *Heart of Anger* by Lou Priolo
 - *Counsel from the Cross* by Elyse Fitzpatrick (not parenting but good content)

Preparing for Teenagers:

Teenagers have three primary questions:

- Who am I? = Identity
- Where do I fit? = Belonging
- What difference do I make? = Purpose
- All of these have solid answers in the Bible
- Start discipling them in these truths as soon as they can understand these concepts

Parents, How Do You Define Success?:

- Don’t fall into the achievement trap
 - Academics
 - Sports
 - Future job success
 - Financial gains
 - American dream
- What do your conversations look like in the car and at the dinner table?
 - “God’s praiseworthy deeds” (Psalm 78)
 - What are you learning about Him?
 - Areas we need to trust God as a family
 - Kids—discover your gifting and explore how God can use that for His work