

Parenting from Proverbs

Speaker: Dr. John Street

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Session 6 – Questions and Answers

Summarized & Condensed

Note: Please listen to the audio for a full discussion of the Questions and Answers. You may find it useful to print out this Q&A and add your own further notes as you listen.

Moderator – Pastor Jason Whitley

So now is our Q&A session. I have ten questions here, and we'll start with them, then we'll open it up after that. I picked these questions, and I'm just going to read them and step aside and let Dr. Street and Janie answer. We have some great questions here, some very specific. So, let's get started.

Question 1:

As a mom with young children, how do you prioritize time with the Lord when uninterrupted blocks of quiet are hard to accomplish?

Janie Street:

If you're trying to get uninterrupted blocks of quiet time, you're probably not going to be very successful. There may be times when your husband can give you a Saturday morning or some other time where you can go off, like my daughter does. She goes to Starbucks with her Bible and gets some uninterrupted time for about an hour and a half.

But generally, kids don't let you have much uninterrupted time. You can hardly shut the bathroom door for 45 seconds without them finding you! So, I encourage moms to view time with the Lord like their time with their children—it's a 24/7 thing.

Instead of trying to break new ground with Bible reading or set daily quiet time goals, focus on meditating on what you already know—like Sunday sermons or lessons—throughout your day, in those little snatches of time. Meditate on the truths about God's character, like His omniscience and omnipresence (Hebrews 13:5), and apply those truths to your day.

And don't hesitate to ask your husband for some time for yourself. You'll be more grounded in the Word and have a fresh perspective afterward.

Dr. John Street:

Yes, husbands need to give their wives a break. It's sad how many men don't want to deal with the children. As fathers, we represent the Lord in our children's lives. We need to be involved.

Question 2:

What are some practical ways to avoid running on empty, especially as we train and disciple our children?

Janie Street:

First, separate "training" from "discipling." Write down what specific things you are trying to train and disciple your children in.

For example, training them to make their beds is different from discipling them in godly attitudes. Once you get specific, you can seek resources to help you in those areas—such as older parents or your pastor.

Dr. John Street:

It's important to manage your expectations. Today, we live in a Pinterest world where everything has to look perfect, but that's unrealistic. Focus on serving your husband and your children as your first priorities. Let go of the "Pinterest perfect" model.

Question 3:

What does it mean to give grace to your children, and how might we do this practically without allowing them to remain in disobedience?

Dr. John Street:

There's been a trend recently in grace-driven or grace-motivated child-rearing, and some of these ideas go too far. Some of these are the worst books on child-rearing I've ever read. It takes one aspect of theology and over-expands it beyond what the Bible teaches. It becomes a hyper-grace thing. Grace doesn't mean giving your children license to do whatever they want. Children thrive on clear parameters, just like in a game of tennis where boundary lines are needed.

God set clear boundaries for the Israelites, even in small details. We need to be gracious to our children, yes, but we also need to set very clear expectations. Without boundaries, children become frustrated.

Question 4:

Paul exhorts fathers in Colossians 3:21 not to provoke their children to anger. How might fathers do this knowingly or unknowingly, and how can we avoid this?

Dr. John Street:

Fathers provoke their children to anger in various ways—by being too harsh, too permissive, or constantly pointing out their failures. In 1 Kings 1:5-6, we see how David never disciplined his son Adonijah, which led to disastrous results. Discipline sometimes involves bringing pain into a child's life, but it should never provoke them to anger through harshness or neglect. Fathers need to balance consequences with loving instruction.

Question 5:

Our nine-year-old son doesn't deal with stress well. He gets easily frustrated and ends up in angry tears. Do you have any practical advice?

Janie Street:

First, observe your child to figure out what triggers his stress. Is it when things don't go his way? Is it due to external factors like chaos or missing a parent? Some children struggle with controlling their emotions and need to be taught self-control.

Dr. John Street:

Teach your child that life won't always go his way and help him learn self-control. Proverbs warns against associating with an angry man (Proverbs 22:24), and we are instructed to be slow to anger (James 1:19). Let your son know he can exercise more self-control than he thinks he can.

Question 6:

How do we address daring behavior that isn't necessarily sinful, like jumping from trees to trampolines or throwing objects?

Janie Street:

Some children are naturally more daring than others. The goal isn't to squelch their enthusiasm, but to help them think about the consequences. Teach them that their actions have consequences, both immediate and long-term.

Dr. John Street:

Daring behavior comes from a sense of invincibility. Proverbs teach us that kids don't always think about the consequences of their actions (Proverbs 22:3). It's our job as parents to help them think before they act.

Question 7:

How much time should I allow my children to watch TV each day?

Dr. John Street:

It's less about how much time and more about what they're watching. Television can be a good educational tool if you monitor the content and use it as a learning opportunity. Don't use TV as a constant babysitter, and remember it's a privilege, not a right.

Janie Street:

Use TV and movies to teach discernment. Sit with your kids and talk about the characters, their choices, and how it aligns with biblical principles.

Question 8:

Why are words like “weary” and “overwhelmed” often used to describe motherhood? How can we prevent these feelings and replace them with joy?

Janie Street:

You can't always change your feelings, but you can change your thinking. Focus on Philippians 4:8, which tells us to dwell on what is true. Often, our weariness comes from unrealistic expectations—like trying to do everything perfectly. Be realistic, and recognize that God's grace is what will make your children succeed, not your efforts alone.

Question 9:

How do you enforce consequences for disobedience, and should you expect children to obey “because I said so”?

Dr. John Street:

Yes, there are times when children need to obey simply because you said so. But over time, you should also help them understand the “why” behind your expectations. If children only obey out of duty, they may not internalize the values you're trying to instill.

Question 10:

What are practical ways to teach children to think critically about the media they consume?

Janie Street:

We have an opportunity to teach our kids to think when they watch TV or movies. Help them see the heart of the characters and understand what's really going on. You want them to develop a biblical worldview in a controlled environment before they encounter the world outside.

Scripture References

1. Hebrews 13:5

"Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'"

2. Colossians 3:21

"Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged."

3. 1 Kings 1:5-6

"Now Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, 'I will be king.' And he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. His father had never at any time displeased him by asking, 'Why have you done thus and so?' He was also a very handsome man, and he was born next after Absalom."

4. Proverbs 22:24

"Make no friendship with a man given to anger, nor go with a wrathful man."

5. James 1:19

"Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger."

6. Philippians 4:8

"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."
