

The Game of Life Series – Part 3

Succeeding in Parenting

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March 31, 2019

Even if you're not a parent or a grandparent, the scriptures teach us that God relates to us as a parent would to his children. So, the truths that we're teaching you to plant into your children are the same truths God wants to impart into your life.

I believe parenting is one of the most exhausting and the most rewarding experiences on planet earth. For those of you feeling a little more on the exhausted side I wanted to start with something fun this morning to lift your spirits.

You know you're a parent of small children when...

- Your favorite Christmas carol is Silent Night.
- The 5-second rule has been extended to 5 minutes.
- You lock yourself in the bathroom to get three minutes all to yourself
- Stay-at-home mom when, checking one thing off your to-do list for the entire day, is enough to celebrate with cake and ice cream.
- You have to repeat yourself 7x for them to even hear you
- You tell your guests not to mind the Cocoa Puffs that just popped out of the cushions.
- When your adult co-workers catch you humming the theme song to Mickey Mouse Clubhouse

Turn to Psalm 127:1-5

How do we raise children in this generation? I hope that by the end of today you walk out the doors with the confidence that you can launch your children into the world as whole-hearted lovers of God and lovers of life.

At first glance the two paragraphs seem disconnected. The first paragraph about houses, cities. Second paragraph about children and inheritance. Pay attention. Same truth.

Read Psalm 127:1-5

v.1 In vain – like sawdust in the wind

v.5 "Content with their opponents in the marketplace of public influence"

Blown around verses Unshakable.

Heritage – Inheritance. Like the land of Israel given to the Israelites.

Accumulates value the more you invest. Keeps getting better when you nurture it.

Inheritance isn't wealth and houses and society that you invest in and leave for your children.

Inheritance is your children you invest in and leave for society. I want to remind us today

Your children aren't a responsibility you need to manage, they are a joy and inheritance you invest in!

Parents, in the grind of everyday life and the crowdedness of our calendars, so often we flip into this mindset that our children are in the way, or they are slowing us down.

*"I really need to get to the store...clean the house...mow the yard
I really need to get them to "do this"—get your coats on...or brush your teeth (tenth time...)*

Celebrate this moment with your children. You're never going to have it back. Capture the opportunities right in front of you.

- I think of the Dad who came home from work exhausted and his son wanted to play hockey. What a Dad!
- I think of the stay-at-home Mom who's half-way into her recipe and stops for her toddler

This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Psalms 118:24

Don't wish it away. Don't lose your joy. Don't lose sight of your most important investment.

- They are never going to be 15 again and figuring out those awkward relationships.
- They are never going to be 1 again with those big delicious ice cream cheeks.
- They are never going to be 4 again with boundless and neurotic energy.

When we treat our children like someone we love spending time with, it reaches deep into their soul and turning on all the lights. It awakens them to love, their value, God.

So, when we interact with our children, what does that investment look like? What exactly are we **imparting to them?** (We are imparting the same thing God wants to impress into us.)

Every child needs to be shaped by affection and correction.

God is Love. God is Holy. These are the 2 pillars that hold up the universe.

All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful Psalm 25:10

The way of the Lord is right and just Genesis 18:19

Jesus came full of grace, and truth.

God's desire is for every person to encounter his love and his holiness. God uses Mom and Dad to flip on all the lights. We're modeling God to our children and awakening our children to their heavenly Father.

Remember, God builds the house. We are raising them in the ways of God. These aren't the ways of Brian. They are the ways of God. Everything in the Flewelling house is going to look like Jesus. Loving kindness and holiness.

[Psalms 127:4-5 Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them.](#)

Like arrows, our children are successfully launched when God's love and his holiness are operating in their lives.

Love without truth (Parents who provide no boundaries, consequences, instructions, feedback) leads to confusion, entitlement, narcissism, mediocrity, and even enslavement to the child's whims.

Truth without love (Parents who reprimand without relationship) Creates legalism, rigidity, and intolerance and pain and rebellion, and voicelessness. The human soul shuts down.

We need habits of affection and correction, not just from their parents, but as parents we're always pointing them to the Jesus...Mommy and Daddy are just the custodians, temporary models, leading them to their heavenly Father.

Affection has to be expressed.

It can't just be something I feel in my head and heart.
God expressed his love for us...through Christ.

In empirical ways that your son or daughter can say "I love it when they do that.

- I love it when Mom and I go and get our nails done together, talk about life.
- It makes me feel good when Dad puts the phone down and helps me with my homework.
- Even before we have language we are shaped by love.
- [Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it. \(KJV\) Proverbs 22:6](#)
 - Train - To put a flavor in a child's mouth so it develops a taste for that flavor.
 - You train a child to desire something...
- My 1-year old to love His Mamma, and Dadda.
- You were built for love.

Create tangible habits that mold your children with love

- Not just sitting on the couch and watching TV, but we watch TV with our arm around each other.

When we express love to our children, and plant love into them—and teach them that’s just a taste of God’s love...We are shaping their personalities and making them powerful people.

Romans 8: What can separate me from the love of God?

So we need affection. Affection has to be expressed, but...

Correction has to be given.

If our children are going to be unshakable in the marketplace of public influence, they need the anchor of God’s truths planted in their memories, their speech, their habits.

- The World is at war with God’s truth.
- Satan is called the father of lies?
- Jesus said, “I am the truth.”
- The Holy Spirit is the counselor who will guide you into all truth.
- God’s Word is flawless, reviving the soul.
- [Genesis 18:18-19](#)
For I have chosen (Abraham), so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just...
- Parents, you are not their final source of truth.
- We are Teaching them God’s truths, ways. You’re modeling God’s truth.
- Point them to God’s leadership.
- God’s word is their source of truth. You’re teaching them God’s word.

Correction doesn’t have to be harsh. Correction doesn’t equal destruction.

- Ie. Ariana’s coach last year, and this year.
- Maybe for some of you, that conversation is centered around. Technology.
- Respect – “we don’t talk to each other that way.” Mutual respect

Loving boundaries preserves the dignity God designed in his children.

Loving boundaries should preserve the atmosphere of God’s holy presence in your home.

Have devotions with them. Let them pray and read for themselves. When we establish certain behaviors in our home, the way children treat one another, we say, your home should be a model.

Followup:

- **Podcast – one couple shares their parenting journey.**
- **THRIVE CONFERENCE** – register in the lobby, or on your device this moment.