

A LEGACY OF PROCESS

Sunday, April 23, 2017

BIG IDEA

- A legacy worth leaving is one where we are committed to the *process* of change, not an event.

PARENTING IS A PROCESS, NOT A SERIES OF EVENTS

- Justification = Event // Sanctification = Process
- The event of **Justification** + The process of **Sanctification** = The result **Glorification**
 - All of this is for the explicit worship and glory of Christ
- Romans 5:1-11
 - Justification
 - v. 1 - “**Therefore**,” points us to 4:20-25
 - v. 1 - “**we have been justified**” and “**we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.**”
 - This is not a *subjective feeling* but an *objective reality*
 - Sanctification
 - v. 2 - This “**grace in which we stand**” refers to the secure position of the believer’s standing (as a blessing of justification), and the “**hope of the glory of God**” refers to the promise that Christians will be glorified and perfected at the last day—a hope that results in joy.
 - vv. 3-11 - “**...much more than that,...**” It is Christ’s joy to make us into his image that he might glorify the father.
- Philippians 2:12-16
 - v. 12 - “**Therefore**,” points us to 2:9-11
 - v. 12 - “**...work out your salvation with fear and trembling...**”
 - Salvation, then, is a process. The process component of salvation is sanctification.

- v. 13 - “..., **for it is God who works in you, both to will and work for his good pleasure.**”
 - Sanctification, just like justification, is controlled by God. *The only thing that we bring to the table is our need for salvation from sin.*
- vv. 14-16 - The result of sanctification is that we “**shine as lights in the world,...**”
- This is sanctification!
- Parenting, then, like sanctification, is **NOT** a series of dramatic confrontations and confessions (**event(s)**). It is a lifelong commitment to seeing the fruit of incremental awareness and progressive change in our children (**process**).
 - We will never be stern enough, have enough boundaries, be loud enough, or make threats serious enough to win our children’s hearts.
 - *When we do this, we’re parenting through events. This is reactionary! We need to be proactive, which works along the grain of sanctification.*
 - If we treat sanctification as a series of events, parenting will be a life-long discouragement.

TREATING THE ILLNESS, NOT THE SYMPTOMS

- It’s tempting to get caught up in our children’s behavior = treating the symptoms
- We need to realize that we are instruments in the Redeemer’s hands = treating the illness
 - So we must understand that sin is an illness, not a series of unrelated events/symptoms
 - Ergo we must treat the illness, not the symptoms
- Psalm 51:1-6
 - *You only make this cry when you have come to the point where you acknowledge that the greatest danger in your life lives inside you, not outside you (v. 5 - sin is imputed).* And then because of that sin, you are a person in desperate need of God’s help (**his salvation**) and the helpers he has placed in your life (**those who constantly push you back to the God of that salvation**).

- There is no more important function for a parent than this: to lovingly and patiently bring our children to the point where they too cry out for God's mercy.
- Crying out for God's mercy happens only when you have acknowledged the sin that is inside you from which you are not able to free yourself.
- Children who begin to humbly and willingly acknowledge their sin not only run to God for his help, but they quit resisting the help, guidance, correction, and instruction of their parents too.
 - We have to make sure our children understand the nature of sin so that they don't minimize it's dangers
 - Our children don't come into the world seeing their sin or acknowledging its gravity. That's our job as parents.
 - Sin means our children, on their own, have no ability to live as God has ordained and commanded them to live. (Romans 3:23)

LEAVING A LEGACY OF PROCESS

1. Embrace the freedom the Father has given us and stop parenting with an event mentality.
 - Parenting is **NOT** a series of unrelated, corrective encounters.
 - It **IS** a life-long corrective process of being made in the image of Jesus. This is sanctification.
 - Remember that justification is the only dramatic transformational experience
 - Parenting is little moments with little steps
 - Be content with adding pieces to the puzzle, not completing the whole thing in one sitting.
 - Remember, you're unfinished too!
2. View parenting as an unending conversation
 - Free yourself from the unrealistic goal of getting what you want/or the behavior you expect from your kids in a single conversation
 - The father does not have this expectation for us!
 - He allows us the grace to change over the course of our whole lives - but he does require change! (Titus 2:11-15)

- This will free you from constant anger. You'll stop being frustrated that we have to have "another" conversation. Instead, it will be another opportunity to continue the "same" conversation about the Gospel.
- 3. Start parenting for the long-haul
 - Move away from reactive parenting. Being proactive as a parent means that know where our kids are (spiritually, cognitively, emotionally, behaviorally, etc.), and we look for opportunities to shepherd their hearts before an "event" happens.
 - Reactive parenting tends to be emotionally reactive. This is why we must constantly be changed by the spirit. Emotionally unhealthy parents have diminished capacity to take care of their children.
 - Proactive parenting doesn't see our kids as burdens, interruptions, or hardships. It engages earlier, more often, and more fruitfully.

CONCLUSION

- What gets in the way of good parenting?
 - It's **NOT** a lack of capacity
 - It's **NOT** a lack of ability
 - It's **NOT** a lack of opportunity
 - It's **NOT** their character
- Rather, it's our character. More often than not it's our lack of recognition for our own need for the process of sanctification. Or even worse, our rebellion from sanctification.
 - If your relationship with God is marginal, theirs will be.
 - If your prayer life with God is anemic, theirs likely will be.
 - If your relationship with God's word is boring,...