



SOWING AND REAPING

Sowing and Reaping . . . last week we considered sowing to the Spirit or to the old sinful nature. We will either reap the fruit of the Spirit or the deeds of the flesh. Ultimately, we will reap either eternal life or eternal death.

-- The law of sowing and reaping has many applications beyond this most critical one.

-- One of those is in the area of sowing into our children's lives.

-- The greatest influence on the kind of kids we reap is what we sow into them.

TR: What do we want see reaped in our kids' lives?

WHAT DO WE WANT TO REAP?

- “Well-behaved kids, with great self-esteem, who are self-righteous and go to hell.”
- “Secure; tender and humble-hearted kids, who love God and go to heaven.”

If you had to choose between these two options, which would you?

-- READ SLIDE

-- It seems like the world around us would be happy with “well-behaved kids with great self-esteem.”

-- And, I’m not sure that most would be able to differentiate self-esteem from self-righteousness, and, of course, no one wants to go to hell, if there is such a place.

-- BUT, how can we sow looking toward the harvest of READ SLIDE (second option)?

TR: Before we try to answer that question, let me give you some caveats and disclaimers.

CAVEATS AND DISCLAIMERS

- Parents cannot **force** their kids to become Christ-followers. Proverbs 22:6 is a proverb, not a promise.

3

I also encourage you to follow along in the extensive notes in your worship flier (inside front cover . . . inside back cover . . . back cover)

- **A caveat is a warning, a caution flag.**
 - **A disclaimer is a clarification to help avoid misunderstandings by denying some things.**
 - **First, READ SLIDE**
- TR: Proverbs 22 reads . . .**

**Train up a child
in the way he should go;
even when he is old
he will not depart from it.**

ESV

READ SLIDE

-- The point of this proverb is to encourage parents to sow into their children the instructions regarding right moral conduct.

-- All things being equal, the reaping will be that the child will not depart from it.

TR: However, as our caveats and disclaimers remind us . . .

CAVEATS AND DISCLAIMERS

- Parents cannot **force** their kids to become Christ-followers. Proverbs 22:6 is a proverb, not a promise.
- We are responsible for our parenting. Our children are responsible for how they **respond** to our parenting.

READ SLIDE (second point)

TR: Deuteronomy 24 reminds us . . .

Fathers shall not be put to death because of their children, nor shall children be put to death because of their fathers. Each one shall be put to death for his own sin.

ESV

READ SLIDE

-- There is individual responsibility. Our children are not puppets.

-- Our child's success or failure is not our ultimate responsibility . . . they are responsible for what they reap.

-- BUT, we are responsible for how we sow into them.

TR: It is also important to remember . . .

CAVEATS AND DISCLAIMERS

- We can't "trick" our kids into becoming believers by simply having them repeat a prayer.

7

READ SLIDE

-- While I rejoice when I hear of a child putting their trust and praying to receive Him as Lord and Savior, I usually reserve judgment until I see fruit.

-- This is the same thing that I tend to do with adults.

TR: We must also remember . . .

CAVEATS AND DISCLAIMERS

- We can't "trick" our kids into becoming believers by simply having them repeat a prayer.
- The church community is here to support and encourage parents, not to **replace** them.

READ SLIDE (second point)

-- The Bible makes clear that it is the parents' job to discipline and instruct their children, especially fathers.

-- Our children and youth programs are here to help, not replace.

TR: And finally . . .

CAVEATS AND DISCLAIMERS

- Single parenting can be brutal, but God can help us through the challenges.

9

READ SLIDE

- Parenting is exhausting, even for those who can tag team.
 - But, for those who face the challenges without having the support of a spouse . . . it can be especially hard.
 - Yet the difficulty doesn't change the principle of sowing and reaping.
- TR: So, WHAT must we seek to wisely sow into our children's lives?**

WHAT MUST WE WISELY SOW

- We must understand God's model of "law and grace." As Galatians 3:24 teaches us, the law was our **guardian** until Christ came.

Even before answering that, we must understand . . . READ SLIDE

-- Cf. the book "Parents in Pain" . . . God understands and God models parenting us.

TR: In Galatians we read . . .

Now before faith came, we were **held captive** under the law, **imprisoned** until the coming faith would be revealed. ²⁴So then, the law was **our guardian** until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.

ESV

READ SLIDE
TR: Verse 25 . . .

²⁵But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a **guardian**,
²⁶for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.

ESV

READ SLIDE

- God begins with law and then moves to grace.
 - Certainly there is grace within the law, but as Paul says, the law was our guardian to lead us to Christ.
 - With our young children we must remember that they must have law so that they see their need for grace.
- TR: What else must we sow?

WHAT MUST WE WISELY SOW

- Our furrows must remain “straight.” We must want our children to . . .



READ SLIDE

TR: We must want our children to have two things . . .

WHAT MUST WE WISELY SOW

- Our furrows must remain “straight.” We must want our children to . . .
 - to reach a sober assessment of themselves as **sinners** in need of grace.

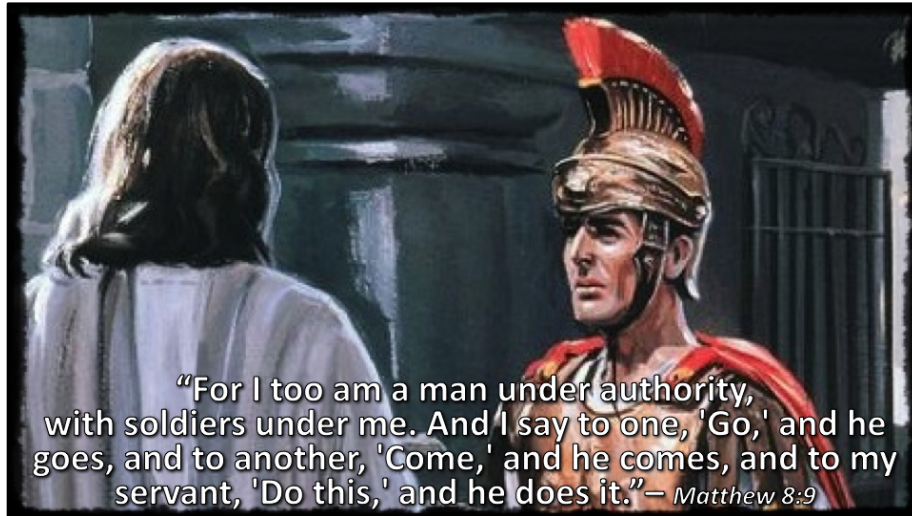
**First, to . . . READ SLIDE (arrow point)
-- That fits in with “law, then grace.”
TR: And, second . . .**

WHAT MUST WE WISELY SOW

- Our furrows must remain “straight.” We must want our children to . . .
 - to reach a sober assessment of themselves as **sinners** in need of grace.
 - to learn that they are “**under authority**”

READ SLIDE (second arrow point)

TR: Even as the Roman soldier said to Jesus . . .



READ SLIDE - "For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."— Matthew 8:9

-- Jesus was amazed at this man's faith . . . because part of faith is trusting the appropriate authority God puts over us.

-- Children must learn that they are sinners in need of a Savior, and that they are to be under authority.

TR: This is one of the most important things that a child under 5 must learn. And it will take discipline to teach them that.

- to learn that they are “**under authority**”
- ❖ **Folly** must be driven from them.

READ SLIDE (sub-point one)
TR: Proverbs 22 says . . .

**Folly is bound up
in the heart of a child,
but the rod of discipline
drives it far from him.**

ESV

READ SLIDE

- Folly, or foolishness, is not childishness or childlikeness, but rather not having the fear of God.
- The fear of God, that reverence that is aware of His holy presence, is the beginning of wisdom.
- EX: Amazing Grace: “grace that taught my heart to fear and grace my fears relieved”
- TR: Learning that they are under authority means that we must address their defiance . . .

- to learn that they are “**under authority**”
- ❖ **Folly** must be driven from them (Prov. 22:15)
- ❖ **Defiance** will not be outgrown and cannot be allowed to continue. This is different than **immaturity**, which will be outgrown.

READ SLIDE (sub-point two)

-- Jesus affirmed a child-like heart but not the defiance that will not be outgrown.

-- Rebelliousness is not outgrown. It may learn to be more politically and socially-correct but it is not like childishness. It will not be outgrown.

TR: Defiance is described in Numbers 15 . . .

Numbers 15:30-31

But the person who does anything **with a high hand**, whether he is native or a sojourner, reviles the LORD, and that person shall be cut off from among his people. ³¹Because he **has despised the word of the LORD** and has broken his commandment, that person shall be utterly cut off; his iniquity shall be on him."

ESV

READ SLIDE

-- Sinning with a high hand . . . despising the word of Yahweh.
TR: So, HOW do we sow these things into our young children?

WHAT DO WE WANT TO REAP?

CAVEATS AND DISCLAIMERS

WHAT MUST WE WISELY SOW

HOW WE CAN WISELY SOW

If we want to have the greatest chance of reaping “Secure; tender and humble-hearted kids, who love God and go to heaven” . . .

-- remembering the warnings and denials that it is not all in our power . . .

-- we wisely sow into them a self-understanding that they are sinners in need of a Savior AND that they are under authority .

..
-- BUT, HOW do we do that? How can we wisely sow into our kids’ lives?

TR: First, we must remember the big picture . . .

HOW WE CAN WISELY SOW

- Remember our life values, such as . . .

. . . what I call our “life values.”

-- The greatest impact we have is by modeling with integrity . . .

TR: Some of the key points on my personal core values, written when we just starting having children, were . . .

- Remember our life values, such as . . .
 - Be a person of integrity, having tender and humble hearts **ourselves**.
 - Help our children be **secure** in our love.
 - Give a clear reason for all disciplinary actions.

READ SLIDE

-- While godly children can come from ungodly homes . . . rarely do godly children come from homes with hypocritical parents.

-- We will talk about discipline in a few moments, but it must occur in the context of a secure love.

-- EX: "You know what?" . . . "Daddy loves you very much."

-- And give clear reasons . . . not, "Because I told you so."

TR: Remember our life values and remember . . .

HOW WE CAN WISELY SOW

- Remember our life values, such as . . .
- Remember our tools

. . . our tools.

TR: Here I am thinking of the five sets of tools I have taught on often and that are part of the training packet we ask first time child dedicators to work through.

- **Remember our tools**
 - **Sword and Shield of Prayer**
 - **Oil and Incense of Healing and Delight**
 - **Basin and Towel of Servanthood**
 - **Rod and Staff of Discipline and Instruction**
 - **Scales and Weights of Applied Wisdom**

It all begins with prayer. We are not good parents if we are not praying for and with our children.

-- To be secure in our love our kids need to know they can come to us for healing and that we show delight in, even when they come back to us after they've messed up.

-- The basin and towel remind us that parenting requires that we give up things. We cannot be good parents and not give up things.

-- EX: "Why don't we have a pool?" "Because we have you!"

-- But it is much bigger than just finances . . . time and energy are limited and godly parenting requires a lot of both.

TR: The rod and staff will be our focus today . . .

Becoming an Intentional, Godly Parent



... keyed into discipline and instruction.

-- And, mostly for older children, which we will consider next week, are the scales and weights of applied wisdom.

TR: As we remember our life values and our tools, the HOW of sowing well demands that we strongly focus on the Rod and Staff . . .

- Specifically, remember the Rod and Staff

➤ THE ROD (**Discipline**)



... beginning first with the rod of discipline.

TR: In your notes you will see numerous references ...

**NOTE: References in the notes to
“Tripp” refer to the book,
Shepherding a Child’s Heart,
by Tedd Tripp**

to “Tripp.” These point you to the excellent book, Shepherding a Child’s Heart.

-- While there are a few points that I think the author pushes too hard against how not to parent, it is a very solid resource, especially for parents of younger children.

TR: In the words of Tripp . . .

➤ THE ROD (**Discipline**)

- ❖ The rod “provides an immediate tactile demonstration of the foolishness of **rebellion**”

... we need to remember the rod because ... **READ SLIDE**
(sub-point)

-- When a child gets older, allowing natural consequences to teach them may be the wise course of action ...

-- **BUT**, when the child is young, they need to have immediate feedback that their defiance is wrong.

TR: Our culture has mixed opinions about spanking, but ...

➤ **THE ROD (Discipline)**

- ❖ The rod “provides an immediate tactile demonstration of the foolishness of **rebellion**.”

- ❖ The rod is biblically endorsed:

READ SLIDE (second sub-point)

TR: I believe this endorsement is repeated again and again in the Proverbs because it is so draining and difficult to keep our furrows straight . . . to persevere and persist as godly parents.

Proverbs 13:24

Whoever spares the rod
hates his son,
but he who loves him
is diligent to discipline him.

ESV

**From Proverbs 13 . . . READ SLIDE
TR: And, from chapter 19 . . .**

Proverbs 19:18

Discipline your son,
for there is hope;
do not set your heart on
putting him to death.

ESV

READ SLIDE

TR: Chapter 22, that we looked at a moment ago . . .

Proverbs 22:15

**Folly is bound up
in the heart of a child,
but the rod of discipline
drives it far from him.**

ESV

**READ SLIDE
TR: Chapter 23 . . .**

Proverbs 23:13-14

**Do not withhold discipline
from a child;
if you strike him with a rod,
he will not die.**

**¹⁴ If you strike him with the rod,
you will save his soul from Sheol.**

ESV

READ SLIDE

TR: And, finally, chapter 29 . . .

Proverbs 29:17, 19

The rod and reproof give wisdom,
but a child left to himself brings
shame to his mother.

Discipline your son,
and he will give you rest;
he will give delight to your heart.

ESV

READ SLIDE

TR: When is a spanking warranted?

➤ THE ROD (**Discipline**)

- ❖ It is required when a directive has been heard and understood by the child, and then is not obeyed without **challenge**, excuse, or delay.

READ SLIDE

-- Tripp is very helpful when he helps us understand obedience as “without challenge, excuse, or delay.”

-- Even as adults, we can learn much from this definition.

Submission to appropriate authority is almost unheard of in our world, even within the body of Christ.

TR: As parents we must accept that “we are the parents” and that we are responsible to parent.

➤ THE ROD (**Discipline**)

- ❖ It is required when a directive has been heard and understood by the child, and then is not obeyed without **challenge**, excuse, or delay
- ❖ We have the God-given authority and responsibility to help our child stay in place of **promised** blessing:

READ SLIDE (second sub-point)

TR: Ephesians 6 teaches us . . .

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ²"Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), ³"that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."

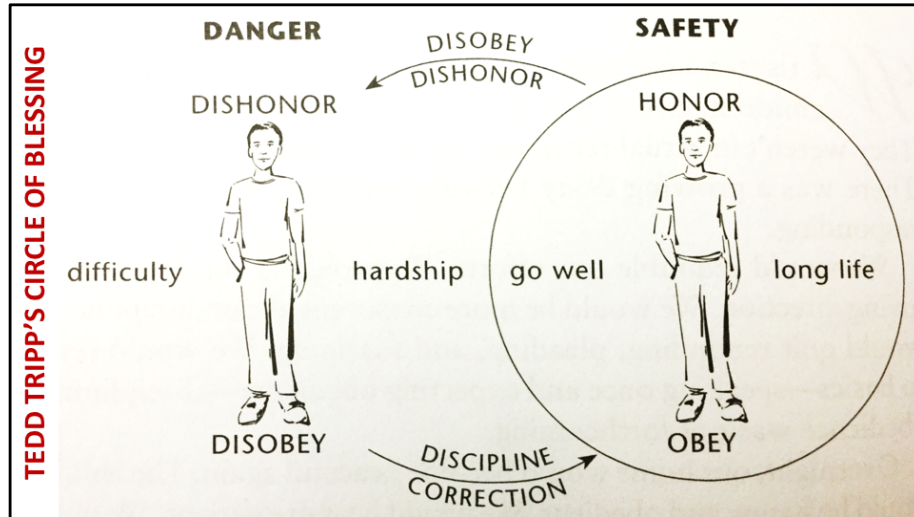
ESV

READ SLIDE

-- Why must children obey their parents? So that they can live within the promise of it going well and living long.

-- Why must parents take up the rod of discipline, which almost nobody really likes doing?

TR: Again, Tripp helps us with this simple drawing . . .



Our children, when they honor and obey, live in the circle of safety.

-- When they disobey or dishonor, they leave the circle of promised blessing and now will face difficulty and hardship.

-- I know it is difficult and sometimes exhausting, but, parents, we must discipline and correct our children.

-- We must rescue our child from the danger zone and return them to the circle of safety and blessing.

EX: What parent wouldn't snatch their child back from the edge of the cliff and certain death?

TR: This means keeping our standards the same as the biblical standards.

➤ THE ROD (**Discipline**)

- ❖ We must **consistently** maintain the **high** standards of the Bible.

The temptation is to discipline only when we have the energy for it or when we are finally fed up.

-- Some are tempted to lower the standards and allow aspects of defiance to be labeled as immaturity.

-- The rules need to be the same, day after day.

-- The law must reflect the high standards of the Bible.

TR: Most of us aren't thinking high enough and need to be reminded of what our Savior taught in the Sermon on the Mount . . .

Matthew 5:27-28

"You have heard that it was said,
'You shall not commit adultery.'
28But I say to you that everyone
who looks at a woman with lustful
intent has already committed
adultery with her in his heart.

ESV

READ SLIDE

- The high standards include both the methods or actions of a child . . . AND their motives or heart's intentions.
 - We are seeking to shepherd their hearts, not just get them to conform outwardly.
 - This is the point at which many of us err and move toward raising little hypocritical Pharisees.
- TR: All this talk of discipline, or the rod, may make you uncomfortable but Tripp does us a great favor by giving us specific guidelines for spankings . . .

➤ THE ROD (**Discipline**)

- ❖ We must **consistently** maintain the **high** standards of the Bible.
- ❖ We must administer the rod responsibly, carefully, in a timely, measured way that is controlled. NOT in **anger** or inconsistently. NOT without persistence and effectiveness.

... probably the best I remember reading.

-- READ SLIDE (second sub-point)

-- NOT IN ANGER . . . this is where some cross the line into abuse.

-- But, also with effectiveness . . . failure to be effective because not felt.

TR: What is called “Grandma’s paddle” may be cute . . .



. . . but it is ineffective for a parent.

-- Remember, we are doing our God-given duty of rescuing our child and bringing them back into the circle of promised blessing.

TR: Yet, we must be careful and under control . . .

➤ THE ROD (**Discipline**)

- ❖ When we discipline out of anger we teach the fear of **man**, not the fear of God.

. . . for when we discipline . . . READ SLIDE

-- If our kids only listen to us when we fly off the handle and express our anger . . . we have taught them to fear man but not to fear God.

-- Deal with the defiance, the unwillingness to obey without challenge, excuse or delay, immediately.

-- I encourage you to get the book and read on the further helpful instructions given there about doing it privately and more.

TR: As we remember our life values and then our tools, specifically the rod, we must also remember the companion tool . . .

- Specifically, remember the Rod and Staff

- THE ROD (**Discipline**)

- THE STAFF (Instruction)



... the staff. This involves talking with your child and giving them patient instruction.

TR: It is helpful to remember these general guidelines for different aged younger children ...

➤ THE STAFF (Instruction)

- ❖ Under 5 years old, the main goal is to help them learn to **submit** to authority. From 5-12 the focus moves on to **character** development by dealing with wrong behavior, even if it is not done “defiantly.”

READ SLIDE

-- As children get older, we will need to be aware that they may learn how to not come across as defiant while still choosing to not meet up to God’s standards.

-- We are not just trying to raise well-behaved kids, but kids who have godly character as evidenced by a tender and humble heart before the Lord.

-- This is especially important to remember for those of us with compliant children. Outward compliance is not the ultimate goal of our parenting.

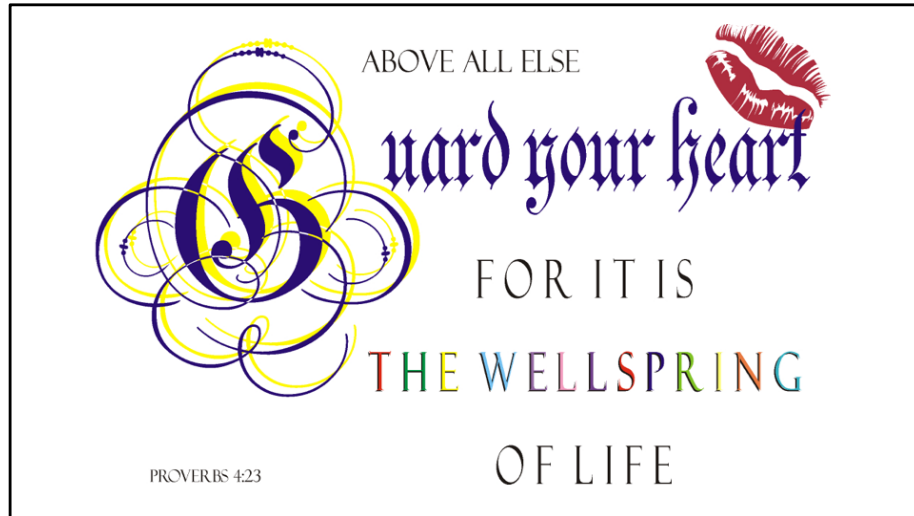
TR: We must never forget that . . .

➤ THE STAFF (Instruction)

- ❖ We are seeking to shepherd their hearts, which are the **well-springs** of their lives (Prov. 4:23). So, we must talk with them often, not just when they've done something wrong.

... READ SLIDE

- The mouth will speak the overflow of the heart, so we must listen to what their mouths say.
- The STAFF is not all about giving lectures but the interaction of instruction.
- EX: A good teacher doesn't teach content but teaches students.
- TR: Make time to talk and to listen, for only then can you help them ...



... guard their hearts.

-- By the way, how are you doing at guarding your heart as an adult? It is still the wellspring of your life?

TR: What does talking and listening do to help us shepherd our child's heart?

➤ THE STAFF (Instruction)

- ❖ Talking helps us understand and deal with the **intent** of our child's heart. The intent of the heart is even more important than the specifics of behavior.

READ SLIDE

TR: And talking, both speaking and listening, will . . .

➤ THE STAFF (Instruction)

- ❖ Talking helps us understand and deal with the **intent** of our child's heart. The intent of the heart is even more important than the specifics of behavior.
- ❖ Without talking we cannot appeal to their **consciences**.

... help us know how to appeal to their consciences.

-- We are trying to help them see themselves as sinners in need of a Savior. Especially as they hit the elementary ages, we must appeal to the consciences.

-- Without talking we can't really do that, can we?

-- Parents, take up the rod and staff! Sow into your children's hearts the fear of God.

TR: But, be careful not to sow . . .

WHAT DO WE WANT TO REAP?

CAVEATS AND DISCLAIMERS

WHAT MUST WE WISELY SOW

HOW WE CAN WISELY SOW

**HOW TO SOW TO REAP
LITTLE PHARISEES**

... in a manner that will most likely reap little hypocritical Pharisees.

TR: Hopefully we will take this “how to” section as a “NOT how to” reminder . .

HOW TO SOW TO REAP LITTLE PHARISEES

52

- Misunderstand God's model of law and grace.

If we want to raise little Pharisees . . .

- Let's first misunderstand God's use of law and grace.
- Remember, the law **LEADS** us to grace.
- The law is not an end in and of itself.

TR: Second, . . .

HOW TO SOW TO REAP LITTLE PHARISEES

- Misunderstand God's model of law and grace.
- Forget that Pharisees were strongly criticized by Jesus as hypocrites. One could describe them by their "judgmental posturing."

READ SLIDE (second point)

-- The Pharisees postured themselves . . . they cleaned the outside of the cup while leaving the inside filthy.

-- And their posturing made them assume that everyone else is doing the same . . . making them judgmental.

TR: If you want to reap little Pharisees, make sure that get this message . . .

HOW TO SOW TO REAP LITTLE PHARISEES

- Only be concerned about our child “looks good” and teach them how to **posture** themselves and perform for others.

... that what we're really concerned about is what others think
... how we look to others.

-- EX: “Don't do that . . . what will other people think?”

-- With those under 5 we want them to learn to be under authority . . .

-- but with those older than about 5, we want them to learn their need for a Savior.

-- This means talking with them about the intent of their hearts.

TR: If we want to raise little Pharisees then let's . . .

HOW TO SOW TO REAP LITTLE PHARISEES

- Give them a “law” that they believe they can keep, that is, one that does not require God’s grace and does not cast them on Christ. This will heighten the chances that they will become self-righteous, trusting their own resources to be “good enough.”

READ SLIDE

TR: Our increasingly godless culture wants us to . . .



... lower the bar for our kids and give everyone a participation medal.

-- Don't lower the bar . . . keep the rules the same day after day.

-- Don't lower the bar . . . but remember to look to their intent, their hearts . . . and appeal to their consciences.

TR: But godly parents, who want to fulfill their duty, will . . .

PARENTS, SOW WISELY!



57

. . . parent wisely by sowing wisely.

-- It takes time, attention, patience, courage.

-- We need to pray especially for the young parents, who are setting the forms for the wet cement of their little ones.

-- Those first five years . . . almost no one remembers much about them, but their impact is so strong . . . so, parents . . . parent!

-- Young parents, while raising your kids secure in your love, shepherd your child's heart to know that they are sinners in need of a Savior and to submit "under authority."

-- Sow toward "Secure; tender and humble-hearted kids, who love God and go to heaven," not with an inadvertent eye toward a crop of self-righteous, judgmental Pharisees who merely posture themselves to look good on the outside.

-- Take up the rod and staff. Shepherd their hearts.

-- LET'S PRAY . . .