

Introduction:

First Comes Love, Then Comes Marriage, then comes the Baby in the Baby Carriage. We are continuing our series on “First Comes Love” we’ve talked about dating relationship, God’s design for marriage, and the Bible’s instruction for raising children.

Wouldn’t it be nice if life were that easy? Wouldn’t it be nice if our stories were as simple as a child’s rhythm? Sadly, it’s not.

Relationship fall apart, marriages dissolve, and kids...well they don’t grow up according to plans. One of the most painful things a family will experience, is the pain of a prodigal child. What causes of prodigal children?

Why do Christian Kids rebel? Why do seeming good, Christian raise children sometimes rebel from their Christian heritage? This question is heavy on the hearts of many of our families today, because they have experience life with a rebellious child. They have walked through the dark and difficult days of helping a rebellious child. There are others in the room today, that they haven’t experienced a rebellious child, but they sense it could be right around the corner.

How does one family, raise their children in such a way that one will become a missionary, and the other will become an atheist. How is it, that two parents, committed to Christ, sold out to the Gospel, may have a daughter that never misses church a son that swears he will never go back.

But before we answer the question why Christian kids rebel, we need to be very clear about what rebellion really is.

The definition that we are working with is:

Rebellion is continued defiance or passive indifference toward God, his moral standards, or people God put in authority in a child’s life.

Rebellion isn’t always what we think and it isn’t always obvious. Green hair isn’t necessarily rebellion. Tattoos aren’t necessarily rebellion, neither is music taste, or clothing choices, it isn’t always our lack of manners.

How does a family respond to rebellion? What guides a parent

There are are a few things that Tim Kimmel laid out in his book “Why Christian Kids Rebel” that cause Christian kids to rebel against their faith.

1. Your Christian Kid isn’t Christian after all. They maybe inoculated to the Gospel. Maybe they were fans of Jesus but were never followers.

-Rebellion isn't really rebellion. Their behavior is simply par for the course. Mom and Dad can't expect Christ-like life, when they have never received new life.

2. Your Christian Kid is Confused.

-Adolescents is confusing. Psychological changes, physical changes, social changes and really create instability in their spiritual lives. Frontal lobes in the brain aren't fully developed until 25.

3. Bondage to Sin

Text: Genesis 4:7b ..sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it."

God speaks these words to Cain, the first rebellious child in history, about the nature of sin and how it will play out in Cain's life.

God personifies sin in these few words, giving a word picture that sin is waiting like a blood thirsty threat, or like a wild animal waiting to strike it's prey.

Explains to us, that sin desires us, and it wants to rule us, but God says we must rule of it. Many children and students, unknowingly, will be captured by sin, and that sin will convert to bondage, and that bondage will take them on a while ride of rebellion.

1. What is bondage?

Bondage: Deep rooted sin, that is engrained in lifestyle, and becomes difficult to resist.

Bondage is sin that converts to deeper level.

One of the reasons Christian Kids rebel is because of bondage. A child is walking with Jesus, but then because of sinful bondage, the get off track and jump on a new track with rails of rebellion. Taking them away from everything God wants for them.

ILL: Imagine a teenage girl; committed to church. Attendance in small groups is greater than any other student at the church. She serves every opportunity. She never misses a camp, never misses a mission project. Then one day she meets a guy. The wrong guy, the start dating, and the relationship gets serious fast. Then because he said the right things, and she is desperately wanting to be loved. They have sex. Then what follows is that she stops coming to church, she doesn't want anything to do with camp anymore, she doesn't want to hangout with her Christian friends anymore. Just in a few short weeks....the years of faithfulness to Christ seems to be thrown out the window. She doesn't look, act, or talk like she always has. Everything is wondering why.

More than likely, her rebellion was sparked by bondage. That there was one area of her life that was compromised, but not Satan is holding hostage of all parts of her life.

Like Genesis 4:7....sin has her

I've seen stories like this played out a dozen different time.

Bondage is the precursor for rebellion. It's the first domino that falls that sets off a chain reaction. Rebellion isn't the problem. Rebellion is a symptom of the problem.

Bondage can happen when a student has struggles with a certain sin...that one area of their life is compromised, but the compromise begins to lead into other compromises, that sin breeds new sins. Just because of this one primary struggle, their whole life is altered. Rebellion sets in!

It's a groove or rut. That students can find themselves in. No matter how hard they try, they just can't seem to find level ground.

Bondage isn't just a slip up. It can start with a slip up, but it's more now. The sin has sunk it's claws into a child and a child can't get loose.

Bondage is tricky because we take hold of it in the start, and that something then takes hold of us in the end. The bondage of sin is the **2nd strongest power** on this earth apart of the power of God. This type bondage shackles many students with heavy chains, that students can't see it shake off.

The tricky part about sin is that every sin has the potential to be convert to bondage, and sometimes it's easy to spot, but sometime bondage is both **visible and invisible**.

Visible Bondage

Bondage to Sex

Bondage to Substances

Bondage to Pornography

Bondage to Entertainment

Invisible bondage

Bondage to Image

Bondage to Mindset

Bondage to Opinion

Bondage paves the way to a life of rebellion.

2. How Does this Happen?

Bondage & sin follow a formula

Attacks and temptations happen...

Students are bombarded...it's not easy to talk about spiritual warfare, in this generation of reason. There is a barrage of attacks, concentrated again children. I know this generation of reason, get's awkward when unseen forces are at work, but there is an unseen adversary that wants to assault our children.

Ephesians 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil...

"Satan is carpet bombing out children, day in and day out, weakening defenses"

The unseen cosmic powers of evil, under the command of Satan, tries to lure Christian kids to fulfill legitimate needs in illegitimate ways.

Every child has strong desires for three things...

- 1, To feel **significant**,
- 2, To feel in **control, or under control**.
- 3, To feel **strength**.

Each one of these natural, God given desires. But satan wants to exploit them.

Satan wants children to buy the lie, that they should meet their needs by all means possible. Sate the craving any way you see fit. Satan fires a well placed shot at their hearts and insecurities tempting them to make a choice that is contrary to the will of God.

A child legitimately needs to feel significant.

God says find your significance in me, and what I say about you.

Satan says find your significance is sex, find your significance by alcohol, by your significance in others.

A child legitimately needs to feel control

God says...I'm in control, I have the whole world in my hands.

Satan says...You are in control, and you gain more control by taking this pill, and having this drink, by doing whatever you want on Friday & Saturday night.

A child legitimately need to feel strength

God says...My strength is my perfect in weakness. I'll give you all the strength you need. I am an omnipotent God, and you are my child.

Satan says...You want real strength, keep that image up, keep up the popularity, people will worship you.

Satan leads his attacks by pushing *counterfeit substitutes* as legitimate options to their needs.

This should be no surprise because Satan's mission is to destroy.

John 10:10 The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy

I don't want to give Satan too much credit. **Children are not victims, but they are targets.** The devil didn't make you do anything, but the devil did put a bullseye on the back of young people.

3 John 1: 4 - There is no greater joy than seeing your children walk in truth.

I'm sure there is no greater joy to Satan than to see a child walk in deception. Satan would love for children to believe his lies and lose their formative years of adolescence to rebellion.

There is a real war, that carries a real threat...

Satan is not a greater threat to this generation than previous generations, but he have more resources to attack that ever before.

This is the connected generation which has made this one of the most complicated generations. Children are now digital natives. That level of connectivity can connect them to sin faster than before. So this digital leash, can influence in such an incredible way....Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, preach a message that conflict with God's best. Sin is crouching at the door, maybe a modern translation would be: Sin is only a click away.

It used to be, that school, or friends, or parties, were the places of attack. And that you could retreat to safe places of church, or home, or your room. But now a child brings all those things home with them because their phones are with them.

We must not underestimate the spiritual warfare that is attacking children.

God has given us legitimate needs, and he wants us to fulfill these in legitimate ways. These needs are at their greatest point when a child is growing up.

Attacks: Lies that promise much and deliver nothing.

Defenses weaken...

It's amazing the things that you will do when your at a point of weakness.

My greatest regrets have you usually occurred during the day of greatest weakness. I'm talking about an emotional low, a physical low, social low, and a spiritual low.

Students can experience these lows.

Toxic friends, wrong social circles, or difficult family life, idle time, can wear away at a student's defense system.

The world system can erode away everything strong in a students life. Like water that will erode away at soil and wash away what was once so

Up until this point, sin has been crouching at your door.

Unless they find relief and reinforcement, something is gonna give.

Compromise Occurs

Attacks happen, defenses weaken, and then breaking point. The conception of sin. What does it do...it has you. If not quickly dealt with, it binds you. If a Christian isn't quick to confess and quick to repent sin enslaves, and you end up bound up.

Colossians 3:5 says "Put to death what is earthly in you"

If it doesn't happen quickly, roots grow, and sin takes over.

Guilt and shame terrorize...

If bondage is the precursor to rebellion, shame and guilt are sustainers of rebellion.

We are talking about a Christian kids, Gospel changed children. When a Christian kid rebels...Guilt and shame can terrorize a students.

Someone said the difference between guilt and shame: Guilt says I've done bad. Shame says I am bad.

Both are motivators to cause us to retreat and hide. Like Adam and Eve...the sinned, they were naked and ashamed, and they hid.

The Holy Spirit living inside them know what is going on knows something that something is wrong, but they are so ashamed of what they done that they hide.

They hide it by ignoring it. They hid it by trying build up a wall. Eventually, the are in so inner turmoil that they run away from their Savior, and they run back to the very thing that enslaved them.

They begin to self medicate.

Sin produces shame.

Shame is deadly force.

Shame is not thinking about yourself the way God thinks about you.

Shame for a child feels like they are handcuffed to their past. You can't ever get away. You are always dragging around mistake.

The pain is so severe that the only thing, that the only way you can get relief from the pain is to return to the happy place that produced the sin.

A word of warning parents: Parents shame can perpetuate a student's shame. Parents that try to hide a child's sin because of shame, shows their child that what the real priority is....that is image is better can repentance.

If a parent tries to cover up and deny their own sins, you are essential training up a child to do the same.

ILL: It was once an acceptable things for a young lady that got pregnant out of wedlock, to be shipped off for 9months to distant relatives house. What's so sad about that, is that is perpetuates shame based living.

Shame causes people to retreat to the dark. We need our Christian kids to advance to the light.

Transition

If the shame isn't dealt with, a beachhead is built in a child's life. Satan storms the shores of child's heart and holds hostage every part of their life.

So your telling me that one sin has the power to do all this? One compromise and it could spark rebellion. Absolutely!We must take sin seriously and help you children take their sin seriously.God took sin seriously even to the point of sacrificing his son to destroy it.

3. What can a parent do?

There is no universal fix all for rebellion, but there are some things parents can do to aid in the return of a prodigal child.

Leverage your position

You have the unique privilege to love like no one else.

No one can be mom like you, no one can be dad like you...that God give responsibility and opportunity puts you in a position that cannot be matched by anyone else on this earth.

If or when a child rebels...you can still love them. Even though they may be ransacking your bank account, or causing you to stay up late worrying, or in a place of picking up their mess. You can always love and you should. When you show them a

radical crazy love, the doesn't make sense love, it highlights for them a God that loves them the same way.

By showing them that there is not one area of bondage that will cause you to turn your back on them, you show a student that there is not one area of bondage that will cause God to turn his back either.

True change only happens in the presence of love. The kinda of change that results in a prodigal coming home, is the result of love.

God has loved us when we don't deserve it. You can love them when the don't deserve it! That love is powerful tool at dissolving rebellion.

Create an atmosphere where it's okay to come clean.

Children need to know there is a place to go where they can get help. A shame free home. A place that guilt does not grow.

Parents need to deal with their own junk and children need to see that. If your children see their parents deal with their sin, they inherit a tendency to deal with their sin. If a children see a parent, hide their sin, live with shame...it will be passed down with your children. Kids will never be what they never see.

Make public confession and repentance, not the exception but the rule.

Normalize confession & repentance

This ought to be the anthem of our home:

1 John 1:9 ~ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

"God can't fix what I you don't confess"

- Be un-shockable parents. We have an un-shockable God.
"There is nothing that you can say that will shock me"
"I believe in the depravity of man. I believe in the depravity of children"

That even Christians are capable of horrible things. Godly people can act very ungodly sometimes.

Remove all obstacles from confession and repentance. Parents lead by example.

Widen Your Circle - Get Help

There is a community of believers in this world that has been specially gifted with helping people. There are licensed professional counselors out there that love Jesus and are gifted at helping students find their way home.

Christian Psychological, Heart Life Soul Care, Biblical Guidance Center @ Bellevue Baptist Church, Christian Counseling Center in Bartlett.

You will always be the specialist regarding your child, but there are counseling specialist that God has put in our midst to partner with parents.

Word of warning: Be careful who you send your child to. Secular counseling carries a different world view, that will never harmonize with Biblical teachings.

There are recovering prodigals in this room, there are previously rebellious children, now adults, that are great people to talk with. Ask around in your community group, ask an elder or staff member. Have a conversation, lower your pride and talk with people about your struggles.

Give God time to Work

There are some sins where you can rescue your children from, there some sins that you cannot. When you can't keep them from their sin, you have trust God is still in control. They are more God's child than they ever were yours. God does not give up on His children, but God does not always work same way that we do. We have to trust the process. We need to trust him with time.

Closing:

There is no guarantee!!! There is no magic bullet to kill rebellion. Sin is insanity. **Psalm 73:22 I was brutish and ignorant. I was like a beast toward you.** It never makes sense, never follows the same exact course for every child. Every detail of sin's working in our life cannot always be explained.

But hear the words of Hosea:

Hosea 11:8

8 How can I give you up, O Ephraim?
How can I surrender you, O Israel?
How can I make you like Admah?
How can I treat you like Zeboiim?
My heart is turned over within Me,
All My compassions are kindled.

There is a God that has felt exactly like you do right now. God has also experienced rebellious children. God knows and he relates! When things feel dark...realize, You are not alone. There is an almighty God that stands with you.