

Gratitude in your Family

November 22, 2015

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Philippians 4:12

This is a pretty profound statement by Paul considering he had been:

- Beaten 3 times with rods
- Stoned once
- Shipwrecked 3 times
- One of which resulted in spending a night and day stranded in the open sea
- Imprisoned
- Put on house arrest

Yet, Paul said he had learned the secret to being content or grateful no matter what his situation or circumstances.

- Gratitude is a learned behavior; it doesn't come natural.

3 Things That Keep Us From Creating A Culture Of Gratitude In And For Our Families.

1-Unreasonable Expectations:

Football

- If you are a Carolina Panthers fan-you should reasonably expect the Panthers to win today because they are 9-0.
- If you are a Dallas Cowboys fan-you should reasonably expect the Cowboys to lose this today because they are 2-7.
- Those are realistic expectations!

Starbucks

- Everybody is all fired up about the Red Cup Controversy!
- Christians have taken to social media calling for a boycott and demanding Starbucks go back to putting Merry Christmas on their cups.
- Starbucks is not a Christian Company!
- It's unrealistic to expect them to act like one!

- We have kids and expect they're going to be perfect, then realize they're not.
- We become a Christian and expect all Christians to be perfect, and we discover they're not
- We find a church and expect it to be perfect, and we discover it's not.
- NOBODY IS PERFECT!

What's the Bible Say?

Romans 3:23

Romans 3:10

- Everybody has issues. If you don't think you have issues, that's your issue!

Luke 6:41-42

- All sin is equal of judgment in God's eyes and requires the same price be paid in order to be forgiven...the shed blood of Jesus.
- The point is that we both have something in our eye!
- We need to learn to stop expecting our families to be perfect and give them the grace to grow in their relationship with God just like we "expect" them to do for us.
- When I am more focused on my own sin, my own issues, and my own imperfections, than I am on my spouse's or my kid's; I'm able to be more understanding and empathetic, which empowers me to be grateful for them in spite of their imperfections instead of being disappointed by them.

2-Unfair Comparisons

- I just informed you that no one is perfect, and I know that was tough for some of you to hear...but it gets worse!
- Not only are you not perfect...you're not even the best!
- You will always be able to find someone who is:
 - Smarter than you.
 - Taller than you.
 - Better looking than you.
 - Has more hair than you!
 - Whose house is bigger than yours.
 - Whose car is nicer than yours.
 - Whose grass is greener than yours.
 - Whose kids are smarter or more athletic than yours.
 - Who makes more money than you.
 - And who Seems happier than you!

The reason that's true is because when we are comparing ourselves or our families with others, it's an unfair comparison.

Comparison is the enemy of gratitude & contentment

What's the Bible Say?

About You?

Psalms 139:13-14

-Some translations say "I am fearfully and wonderfully made

Genesis 1:27 says that you were created in God's image.

Ephesians 1:4-5 says you were chosen and adopted by God

Matthew 18:12 says when you were lost God came to find you...and he did!

John 3:16 says that God sent his son to die for you...and he did.

You Should never compare yourself with someone else.

About Your Kids?

Psalms 127:3-5

Your kids are special and unique and were created in the image of God...regardless of their imperfections...and should never be compared to anyone else's!

About Your Spouse and Marriage?

Proverbs 18:22

Ecclesiastes 9:9

1 Corinthians 7:3-5

Men when your wife "feels" like you compare you her because of comments you make, what you watch on TV, or the way you look at other women; her heart is the first thing damaged, and your sexual intimacy is the first thing to suffer.

Wives, when your husbands "feel" like they are being compared to other men (date night photos on Facebook) then sex is just sex and your relational intimacy is the first thing to suffer.

Comparison breeds contempt!

- When you allow yourself the freedom to compare your spouse to others, you began to have disdain for them...not gratitude.

3-Unacknowledged Blessings:

- We live in the most prosperous nation in the world. We have more freedom, possessions, and opportunities than any other people group on the planet.
- Yet:
 - In 2013, we had the 50th highest suicide rate out of 170 nations according to the World Health Organization.
 - Approximately 40 million people in the U.S., 18 and older, suffer from anxiety disorders.
 - More than 2 in 3 adults in the U.S. are considered overweight or obese according to the National Institute of Health.
 - According to the Federal Reserve, in August of 2015, the average household consumer credit card debt was \$7,529.
- I believe one of (not the only) reason these stats are true is because we have failed to learn how to be grateful for what we have and instead have learned to focus more on what we don't.
 - We are constantly driven by the desire for more because we haven't taken the time to acknowledge how blessed we already are.

What's the Bible Say?

- **Psalms 9:1-2-1**
- **Psalms 100:3-5**

Acknowledging our blessings reminds us of how good God has been to us and cultivates an attitude of gratitude that helps us be content, no matter what our circumstances are.

Those three things KEEP you from cultivating a culture of gratitude in and for your family.

Philippians 4:12 and 13.

We can't have his Spirit, without having a relationship with him.