

Parenting in a Culture War

Psalm 127:1–5 (ESV)

INTRODUCTION:

Our practice at First Baptist Church is to teach directly through books of the Bible, rarely taking a pause. But the study of Luke landed on the passage that said,

Luke 13:5 (ESV)

⁵ “...unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

So I thought about calling the sermon, “Turn or burn, mama”, but that seemed harsh on Mother’s Day, so I figured this might be a good time for a stand-alone sermon.

Rarely does one generation surpass their predecessors morally or spiritually.

That is why someone said, *“The compromises of one generation become the excesses of the next”*.

David had Bathsheba, and Solomon had many Bathshebas.

One generation sows the wind; the next reaps the hurricane.

Very often, the only thing standing in the way of the disintegration of any society is that society’s mothers. They are a culture’s last line of defense.

That is why the once powerful leader of France, Napoleon, said:

“Let France have great mothers, and France will have great sons!”

That is why I want to talk to you today about the role of a parent in this generation.

Because you see, there are some things you have a choice in, but some things are simply thrust upon you.

- You don’t get to choose the **family** you are born into. **G.K. Chesterton said**, *“It’s like God drops you down a chimney and says, get along with the people in that house”*.
- You don’t get to choose the **color** of your skin. **Jeremiah 13:23 (ESV)** Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? No, God gave you your ethnicity.
- You don’t get to choose **where you are born** - Paul tells us in **Acts 17:26 (ESV)** “And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place.”

So...many things are chosen for you.

You didn't pick the particular battles that are raging around you at this moment in history...God placed you in this place, at this particular time, and said - ***live and battle there.***

- This week my grandmother went home to be with the Lord. She was born when our country was in the midst of the Great Depression. Her mom and dad had to know how to navigate such times.
- When she gave birth to my mother in the 1950s, racial conflict was raging in the South.
- I was born in 1976...the Cold War was beginning to rage. The threat of a nuclear war was constantly on our minds. Things seemed to be falling apart; Nixon had left the white house, the Beatles dissolved, and Elvis was dead. To make matters worse, Jimmy Carter was President.

There are some churches who are perfectly equipped to reach the world of Eisenhower's administration , but they are powerless today. If the 1950s return, they are well positioned, but they are clueless regarding the issues we face today.

Well, some parents are in the same boat. They aren't equipped for the world their children are actually living in.

In Psalm 127, David presents the mom and dad as warriors on active duty. Their weapons aren't bombs and missiles, but rather children....

CONTEXT: In this Psalm, he presents 4 illustrations - a construction crew, a watchman, a laborer, and a warrior.

TEXT: Psalm 127:1-5 (ESV)

"Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain."

So notice, the idea is that people are building a house, but in some cases, somehow the LORD is building it through them. So, there are two approaches to home building - with the LORD and without the LORD. Here David tells us that you can raise the frame, you can stack the bricks, but it is a grand waste of time without the Lord overseeing the project.

1b.. "Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain."

In that day, the best time to besiege a city was at night when the men were sleeping. So, a wise king would set watchmen on the walls of the city so that they could see a threat coming from afar and awaken the warriors to defend the city. However, David says, the LORD must also watch over the city on your behalf, or the watchmen will be of little help.

² “It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives to his beloved sleep.”

So this is the laborer or the employee. She has read all of the books in the productivity section. She has a highly regimented approach to her day. She gets up before her competition, she works later than anyone else, and she not only works hard, she works smart. But David says... it will never last or meet the deepest needs of her soul.

Then, he hints that there is another approach that will allow you to sleep well at night and will simultaneously be remarkably fulfilled and effective. What is it? Verse three...

³ “Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the **womb** a reward. ⁴ Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one’s youth.”

So, he is referring to the womb, the mother. But notice verse 5,

⁵ “Blessed is the **man** who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.”

So what is the Psalmist’s answer to a meaningless life? Well, it is found in marriage, the union of a man and a woman, that holds the potential, in principle, of bringing new life into the world through children. Those children, David tells us, are **ARROWS** in the hand of skilled warriors... they may be produced, polished, pointed, and propelled in the enemy front lines.

This is not to say that the only meaningful marriages are those that produce children. In fact, a careful study of history will reveal that most of history’s greatest leaders had no descendants or no male descendants to carry on their family name. It is one of the ironies of history. **George Washington, the apostle Paul, and Jesus Christ** - were people who made quite a difference, but did not have biological children.

So, if you do not have children, you are in good company. But if you do, there are two ways to approach parenting.

The Vain Way AND The Warrior Way

WELL, what are the major battles that our children need to be equipped for?

Let me give you the lay of the land that you have been placed into. In this generation, the enemy has a battle plan to come against your kids on **THREE FRONTS**.

1. **Androgyny** - Mom, at their earliest ages you will be tempted to androgenize your child. Dress everyone in beige. Eliminate anything distinctly masculine or feminine about your son or daughter. This sort of thing happened in the 17th Century in France, due to sexual promiscuity.



Syphilis spread like wildfire in France. One of the effects of syphilis was patchy hair loss. **King Louis XIV (14th)** contracted syphilis and began to sport a wig that obscured his syphilis as well as his gender. He presented himself quite differently than his predecessor **King Luis XIII (13th)**, who posed in full battle armor for his portrait just a generation earlier.



The femininity and excesses of the Aristocracy led to the rise of Napoleon in the early 18th century, and many of those long-flowing wigs found themselves in a guillotine.

300 years later, the guillotine is gone, but androgyny remains...see also David Bowie.



Androgyny will be the first temptation. The second will be Gnostic Theology.

2. **Gnostic Theology** - was marked by a belief that the physical was evil and the spiritual was good. So the Gnostics denied that Jesus came in the flesh because nothing good can be material. If you don't understand that, it will be bewildering when you read things like - **2 John 1:7 (ESV)**, "For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist."

The Gnostics believed that the spiritual self was androgynous and could choose whether to express itself as male or female. ¹ Thus, the idea of a man saying that he feels like a woman trapped in a man's body.

Scripture teaches that gender cuts all the way to the very soul of a person. Listen, in 10 million years you will have the very same gender that you had at conception. Your resurrection body will have reproductive organs. To reject your gender is to say that God goofed. Perhaps culture has deceived you, my friend.

Your children are born into a world where Bruce Jenner was declared "Woman of the Year" by Glamour magazine, which should have made feminists everywhere furious. A man says, "See there, being a woman isn't so hard." I've only been one for 15 minutes, and apparently, I am the best there is.

Just this week, transgender college runner Sadie Schreiner won three women's events at the Liberty League championship meet (Division III) on Saturday. He competed in the men's category a year earlier and placed 19th.

Welcome to modern sports! And you will be expected to play along with the charade.

¹ <https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/ancient-heresy-driving-modern-identity/>

Not only that - you are to champion such transitions as cultural heroes.

If a man declares himself to be a dog, we call him insane; if he declares himself to be a woman, we call him courageous.

Androgyny, Gnostic Theology...

3. **Perpetual Adolescence** - Add to the recipe a failure to transition into adulthood. We are facing a generation who are being sent into the world with very little clarity or direction.

Marriage - Is there any wonder why young people avoid marriage until later and later in life? When they do get married, they really don't have any understanding as to what makes a husband's role different from the wife's role.

PEW RESEARCH BOOMERANG KIDS - In 2016, 15% of millennials lived in their parents' home. Fast forward four years, this figure has jumped to 52% of young adults living with their parents, based on the same analysis in early 2020, prior to COVID.

Now, that is not wrong, and at times it can be healthy. The danger comes when the children rely on the parents to pay all the bills, buy all the food, and the kids either make no income or leverage their income for personal pleasure rather than contributing to the needs of the family.

TRANSITION: This generation has spent countless hours being indoctrinated by liberal professors. And we are supposed to correct that with a 30-minute sermon?

GOD HAS A BETTER PLAN, and it's called the Christian family. If you are going to raise kids that will wreak havoc on the enemy in a world like this, there are three things you must get right:

1. Accentuate Gender

From the earliest ages, cooperate with God by parenting your kids according to their gender.

There are cultural trappings that accentuate gender, and they are not all bad. So, for example, style of dress...there are certain ways that culture expects a man who embraces his masculinity to dress. Embrace those things when reasonable.

But the Biblical framework goes far deeper than cultural stereotypes.

A cultural stereotype might be that masculinity is playing in the dirt and wrestling, and femininity is playing with baby dolls and tea parties.

The Biblical framework is different.

- Masculinity, at the principal level, is the glad assumption of sacrificial responsibility. Masculinity provides and protects.
- Masculinity initiates, and feminists responds.
- **Femininity** in a Woman is a Virtue, **Effeminacy** in a man is a vice.

Christians in our generation tend to believe that there is something un-Christlike about masculinity.

Jesus formed cords into a whip and violently drove the money changers out of the 30 acres of property. We hear that and immediately think... "how un-Christlike".

ILLUSTRATION: We see little boys who are always compliant, always gentle; they always keep the rules, they never rock the boat, and we say - you really should go to seminary and be a minister. No one ever says that to the kid who comes home with a black eye and is regularly sent to the principal's office. But sometimes, that kid is simply expressing his God-given masculinity, and he might be just the kind of pastor we need in this generation.

ILLUSTRATION: Girls are glorifiers - Adam gathers the grain, gives it to Eve, and she glorifies it and makes it bread. In the same way - Adam gives his seed to Eve; she glorifies it and gives him a child. That's the Biblical framework.

Raise your sons to be providers and protectors - Raise your daughters to be glorifiers.

Accentuate their gender....

2. Celebrate Maturity

One of the biggest mistakes that I see parents make, especially mothers, is always relating to their sons and daughters like a mother should relate to a toddler. This can be incredibly damaging to the maturity of your kids.

God gave them to you as babies. Enjoy that fully, cuddle them, and care for them all you want. But if you treat an 18-year-old the same way you treated a toddler....you are making life a lot more difficult for all of us.

Just as it is wrong for you to reject their God-given gender, it is equally as wrong for you to reject their God-given maturity.

In other words, God designed them to grow into adults, let them.

I suggest that you create ceremonies around **rites of passage**. Celebrate each new season of life and declare what will change in responsibilities and expectations.

There are **Seven Stages of Maturity**, **each** of which should be celebrated...each of which should allow for new responsibilities and expectations.

1. **Infant to Toddler** - When a child is able to walk on her own, Mommy isn't going to pick your toys up anymore; you pick up your toys. Babies cry and throw a fit, because that is the only way they have to communicate, but toddlers don't get to throw a fit. They can use words.
2. **Toddler to Grade School** - This will involve socializing the child, teaching them how to get along with others. They must learn to get dressed, make themselves presentable and be on time.
3. **Grade School to Junior High** - Wake up, get ready, and fix your breakfast and lunch. Catch the bus. Engage in team sports. Be competitive. Take responsibility for your faith, and share it with others.
4. **Junior High to High School** - Responsible for vehicle, gas, etc. Should be expected to contribute financially and get and keep a job. Let them buy their own clothes some of the time, and make sure they have age-appropriate chores around the house; cleaning, mowing, and washing the cars.
5. **High School to College** - Responsible for living apart from mom and dad, begin to take responsibility for vehicle insurance. Why? They will get tickets; you don't want that affecting your family policy. NEVER pay a speeding ticket for them. The only thing we pay for with our college students is their housing, and they are on our health insurance. Everything else is their responsibility - phone plans, vehicles, tuition, you name it. Now, they have also both started their own business and are making far more than we were at their age.
6. **College to Single Adult** - If they live at home, they will be expected to contribute to the home life, either paying rent or covering a portion of the utilities. If you are a grown man living at home, either step up and contribute or move out.
7. **Adult to New Family**—At this point, they are entirely on their own. The relationship between the parents is purely an informational resource. We provide wisdom and babysitting.

Accentuate gender, celebrate maturity... and third

3. Demonstrate Marriage

Ninety percent of what they need to know to win amid a culture war will be taught by observing a healthy marriage relationship.

DAD - You demonstrate masculinity by providing for your family, by protecting them, and making them feel safe. You demonstrate leadership by going first in areas of spirituality and faith. You demonstrate maturity by navigating the challenges of life, but not blame-shifting, and by showing them how you can submit to the authorities in your life. You

show them how a husband is to love and care for his wife above all other earthly relationships.

MOM - You demonstrate femininity but loving, supporting, and following the leadership of your husband. You don't demand your kids obey you while constantly bucking against the leadership of your husband. You show them how a Godly woman glorifies things. You demonstrate maturity by growing in emotional stability and practicing your spiritual disciplines.

Perhaps, some of you are thinking....pastor, that all sounds really old fashioned... are you sure that's how it ought to be?

CONCLUSION/INVITATION: I came across this a while back...

"Was your mom a mean, old-fashioned mom? Ours was. While other kids ate candy for breakfast, we had to have cereal, eggs, and toast. While others had a Pepsi and a Twinkie for lunch, we had to eat sandwiches. As you can guess, our mother fixed us a dinner that was different from what other kids had, too.

Mother insisted on knowing where we were at all times. You would think we were convicts in a prison. She had to know who our friends were and what we were doing with them. She insisted that if we said we would be gone for an hour that we would be gone for an hour or less.

We were ashamed to admit it, but she had the nerve to break the child labor laws by making us work. We had to wash the dishes, make the beds, learn to cook, vacuum the floor, do laundry, empty the trash, and all sorts of cruel jobs. I think she would lie awake at night thinking of more things for us to do. She always insisted on us telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

By the time we were teenagers, she could read our minds. Then life got really tough. Mother wouldn't let our friends just honk the horn when they drove up. They had to come up to the door so she could meet them. While everyone else could date when they were 12 or 13, we had to wait until we were 16.

Because of our mother, we missed out on lots of things that other kids experience. None of us have been caught shoplifting, vandalizing other's property, or ever arrested for any crime. It was all her fault.

"Now that we have left home, we are all educated, honest adults. And to tell you the truth, we are doing our best to be mean, old-fashioned parents like mom.

I think that's what is wrong with the world today. It just doesn't have enough mean, old-fashioned moms."