

GM OH HVK // online listeners ...

We are almost done with the book of Proverbs ...

Next week we are going to push pause and have a friend and fellow pastor from MHC come preach here.

It's Becky's husband Travis ... [getting the Evans' family one/two punch] :)

But today we are looking at Proverbs wisdom for the family.

Even if you are single ... don't check out.

1. One day you may have a family, and this will help.
2. Even if God calls you to singleness, you can help others in your church family with these truths.

Before we begin, I will tell you that **the first part of the sermon will be more theological ...**

The second part of the sermon more practical ...

So let's jump into it.

Proverbs 18:22

**He who finds a wife finds a good thing
and obtains favor from the LORD.**

Proverbs 23:24

The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice; he who fathers a wise son will be glad in him.

Marriage And Family Are A Gift From God

This is the start of wisdom for your marriage and family.

Wisdom says that everything we have comes FROM GOD.

Which means they are gifts that he's put IN OUR CARE.

We are stewards of these gifts ... which means we are entrusted with them and RESPONSIBLE TO GOD for our role within them.

We don't get to do whatever we want ...

We are called to live according to God's purpose and commands.

For some of us we think our family is perfect ... like the Cleavers.

For others your family is more like the Bundy's.

But, there are only two types of families:

- perfect ones
- AND, REAL ONES

You know what every marriage and family has in common?

It's full of a bunch of sinners.

So you and I have two choices ...

A. Try and live by our own wisdom, OR

B. Turn to God ... and live according to HIS wisdom

Now, I don't want to sell you a false bill of goods.

Even a family following God's wisdom won't be problem free.

[The Notorious PK's ... I was one!]

The wise family is simply people pushing into God's forgiveness for themselves and God's forgiveness for each other.

The Gospel teaches us two unchanging truths to abide in and practice everyday: Repentance & Forgiveness.

Repentance is how you step into God's grace for yourself.

Forgiveness is how you step into God's grace for others.

Jesus said some record scratching stuff ...

But one of the biggest for me is that repentance and forgiveness go hand in hand.

If you can't step into God's forgiveness for others ... you don't get to step into God's forgiveness for yourself.

Does that seem radical and anti-Gospel??? ...

well let's take it up with Jesus:

Matthew 6:14-15

14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Did he really mean that?

And He reiterates it again through a whole parable in Matthew 18.

Repentance and Forgiveness ... they are inseparable in the grand design of God's grace and mercy.

Now if you think that sounds pretty easy to live out... its not.

So we must reckon with what impedes us from living this out.

It's a one word answer: Sin.

Look at the way sin can work itself out in the context of marriage and family.

Proverbs 19:13

**A foolish son is ruin to his father,
and a wife's quarreling is a continual dripping of rain.**

Proverbs 19:26

**He who does violence to his father and chases away his
mother
is a son who brings shame and reproach. (ESV)**

Proverbs 21:9

It is better to live in a corner of the housetop

than in a house shared with a quarrelsome wife. (ESV)

All these verses are pointing to this one fact...

Sin Ruins Marriages And Families

So why don't we just stop sinning?

B/C sin has so much power over us ...

Do you know why that is?

You want to know the honest ugly truth?

It's because we love it.

[LET THAT SIT]

But you might say ... "No, I hate sin ... I love God ... I'm a Christian."

Yet, every time you and I sin ... we are loving ourselves more than God.

That is the ugly reality of sin that we all need to wake up to.

And until we do, we will minimize our sin and make it less ugly and horrible than it really is.

And the result is that you won't turn from it ...

You won't feel the need to repent to God and others.

Let's dig a little deeper into our sin problem ...

At the root of every sin is a desire to exalt ourselves above everyone else ... even God.

At the heart of sin is a self-love that exceeds the love for God and others.

And in marriage and family our sin ends up turning our home into a combat zone of quarreling and rebellion against each other.

[Hatfields & McCoys]

Instead of laying down our lives to bless others ... we fight to bless ourselves.

James 4:1-3

1 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your **desires that battle within you? 2 You **desire** but do not have, so you kill. You **covet** but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. 3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.**

Consider every relationship you can have: marriage, parent, friend, church.

God designed each of these relationships to be a covenant relationship.

Just dropped a big concept on everybody ...

But we gotta get this b/c covenant relationship is a deep, central Bible truth.

It signifies an unbreakable bond.

That is the Biblical meaning of covenant relationships.

I think maybe a picture could help us understand this better ...

Imagine an unbreakable rope joining us together at the waste.

Now, we have these desires as those verses in James 4 point out ...

[Maybe Illustrate tug-o-war with person on stage]

So ... in a relationship we have two options for how we get our desires met.

1. We get them ourselves
 - Tug-of-war. [working against each other]

OR,

2. We help each other
 - walk together in the same direction to give you the desires of your heart.

In the former you are enemies // in the latter you're allies.

The first is the way of sin and selfishness ... the second is the way of love and service.

Dr. Ed Welch is a Biblical Counselor.

He writes that for all of us the pathway to sin is a desire that turns into a demand.

It starts with a good desire ... Example: It would be nice to have 10 minutes of quiet.

That desire then becomes a demand ... I must have 10 minutes of quiet.

The stronger our demand grows the more entitled we become.

Then, when someone violates it ... "Like, kids being rowdy."
... we respond in anger.

We call that discipline or fighting for our right to something.
Neither is true.
That's a sinful response to an unmet demand.

It's important that we don't call sinful responses discipline.

B/C discipline is a good thing ... it's a grace gift from God.

And God's discipline isn't about punishing others when you don't get what you want.

Discipline is about learning and teaching the way in which to walk before God.

Proverbs 19:18

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

Proverbs 22:6

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

Lead Your Family In The Discipline Of Following Jesus

Discipline is disciple-making.

And in disciple-making you spend more time teaching than anything else.

Disciple-making involves time and instruction and dialogue.

Now, we learn in the Bible 2 types of discipline:

- **Formative and Corrective.**

Let's talk about formative discipline first.

Formative discipline is the idea of being molded.

Think of clay in the potter's hand.

God uses formative discipline to shape us more like Jesus.

It's taking part in the spiritual disciplines of Prayer, Bible Reading, Corporate Worship, Serving ...

These are formative habits that place us on the "Potter's Wheel" to be shaped/formed more into Jesus' image.

And in the family ... we not only engage this for ourselves ...

We lead our families by example and by including them.

Too often with people we tell them what to do and don't show up again until they do something wrong.

We come in like the Tasmanian Devil, screaming/yelling/making a big scene...

Then "POOF" we disappear again until the next time.

I doubt our spouse or kids are thinking in those moments ...

"You know this guy has got it together ... they are making so much sense. I really need to listen to what he's saying."

That is not the kind of discipline Proverbs is talking about.

Discipline puts the ONUS on you as a spouse & parent.

You make time ... you are intentional ... you teach and lead by example.

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If you are a parent ... you are the main disciple-maker of your family.

Dad's ... the Bible calls us to be spiritual leaders in our homes. [doesn't mean mom's don't matter]

But are we too busy with other "important things" to do that?

///////

Now, let me give you an easy target ...

B/C I'm sure you're thinking ... "Where do I even start?"

If you do one thing ... do this one thing.

One night a week ... at the dinner table ... read a short Psalm or a chapter in one of the Gospels.

Then ... talk about it together ...

You don't have to be a seminary teacher ...

You don't have to start going through a systematic theology book with your family ...

Open the Bible ... read it ... it is powerful ...

Trust the Holy Spirit ... he will help you ...

Have fun! Trust God!

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When we spend more time in formative discipline ... we will spend less time in corrective discipline.

I can't say that principle is true 100% of the time ... but I think it plays out more often than not.

But this DOESN'T mean we avoid correction.

Correction is good for us

Proverbs 13:24

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

Proverbs 22:15

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

Proverbs 29:15

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

Here is the basic premise of these Proverbs ...

If You Never Correct Your Child They Will End Up Crooked

There will be times when little Johnny or Susy are naughty
...

In those moments they need to be reminded that bad
behavior has consequences.

Some of us hate this part of parenting b/c it feels so unloving.

But correction IS love.

Hebrews 12:5-7,11

5 And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him.

6 For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.”

7 It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

11 For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

These verses are addressed to Christians.

He’s saying God the Father disciplines his children b/c he loves them.

That is an entirely different motivation for correction.

Our Correction Should Be Done In Love, And In The Hope Of Producing Righteousness

Which means we don't spank in anger.

We don't yell and scream.

We don't use belittling language that brings shame.

If this is you (and its been me) ... repent to your kids.

You know ... when God corrects me he never calls me an “idiot” or “dinkus”.

He never uses the familiar shaming phrases ...

- **“What's wrong with you.”**
- **“What were you thinking.”**

But when I'm stubborn and unwilling to repent of my sin,
God the Father uses correction to get my attention.

He brings conviction and leads me to confess and repent,
and he always forgives.

Parents ... This is the right pattern for disciplining your kids.

The Motivation must be Love.

The Goal has to be a future harvest of righteousness in their lives. → [Which means no instant results ... have to leave it to God]

First, PRAY FOR CONVICTION... → **[H.S. convicts hearts ... not the Holy Parent]**

Second, LEAD THEM TO CONFESS → **[God asked Adam in Garden ... Why are you hiding ... Leading him to Confession]**

Third, TEACH THEM REPENTANCE → [Turning from My Path; Returning To Jesus' Path // Ask Forgiveness from God and others.]

Fourth, GIVE THEM FORGIVENESS → [Say I Forgive You ... Show them reconciliation by a Hug.]

[Always do this privately. No public shaming]

It's important to remember that these principles won't guarantee outcomes.

You can lead your family like Billy Graham on steroids.

Your kids still won't turn out perfect ...

You'll still have family quarrels...

B/C no one has the power to change hearts.

And this is where you have to surrender the mirage of control and live in God's sovereignty.

Lead and love your family...

Put your faith and hope in Jesus to save and transform hearts...

And regardless of what your family is doing...

Never Stop Putting God First

There is a lie that can creep into our hearts.

It goes like this...

"If I just become a better spouse/parent ..."

"If I give them what they want ... always make them happy ..."

"Maybe THEN their hearts will soften."

And with good intentions, we end up putting our families first, ahead of God.

And that will crush you, and it will crush them.

Don't put your hope in the fantasy that you can save your family.

Only God can.

Love them ...

And lead them by ALWAYS putting God first and trusting Him.

Will you stand with me ...

I'm going to pray a prayer of confession and repentance ...

As I pray ... simply agree for yourself by saying 'Amen.'

When that prayer is done I'll lead us in Communion together.

PRAY

BAND COME UP

COMMUNION

- Every mistake we've made as spouses and parents is forgiven in Jesus' blood.
- Communion is a reminder that through Jesus' sacrifice we are part of God's permanent family.
- One day there will be a perfect family where the power and presence of sin is NO MORE.
- In some traditions ... EUCHARIST ... THANKSGIVING

- Let's take bread and cup together in Thanksgiving for this great hope we have in Christ.
- And then let's sing ...