

Parenting Teens

GOSPEL-POWERED PARENTING, By William P. Farley, Pg.46-48

The gospel makes parents effective in seven ways.

1. *The gospel teaches Christian parents to fear God.* Parents need this crucial virtue. More than any other quality, God promises to bless the parents who fear him. Chapter 3 will argue this point from Scripture. Chapters 4 and 5 will explain why and how the gospel motivates Christian parents to fear God.

2. *The gospel motivates parents to lead by example.* Paul tells us in Ephesians 5 that God created the institution of marriage to proclaim the gospel. Our children are the first audience impacted. God wants our children to see our marriages, behold the beauty of the gospel, and be irresistibly attracted.

3. *The gospel centers families in their male servant leaders. Christianity* is a patriarchal religion. In both the local congregation and the home, men lead. Gospel-centered churches encourage men to become servant leaders for their wives and children. Gospel-centered churches encourage biblical masculinity. You can be a male and not be masculine. How the gospel builds men is the subject of chapter 7.

4. *The gospel teaches and motivates parents to discipline their children.* It displays the horror of sin. It illustrates its consequences. Therefore, gospel-centered parents persevere in the discipline of their children. The gospel also teaches parents *how* to discipline their children. In addition, teaching the gospel becomes the end of all Christian discipline. How the gospel affects discipline is the subject of chapters 8 and 9.

5. *The gospel motivates parents to teach their children.* The primary teachers of children are not schoolteachers or Sunday-school teachers, but their parents. The gospel is also the essential content of their teaching. How the gospel motivates and shapes what we teach our children is the subject of chapter 10.

6. *The gospel motivates parents to lavish their children with love and affection.* We make the mistake of assuming that all parents love their children. Most parents feel affection for their children, but few love their children with Christ's love. The gospel motivates parents, especially fathers, to love children sacrificially, as Christ loves his church. The gospel defines what Christ's love looks like. How the gospel does this is the subject of chapter 11.

7. The gospel is the solution for inadequate parents. Parents often feel the weight of their failures and inadequacies. No matter how hard they try, their parenting is always woefully inadequate. The gospel is the solution, described in chapter 12. Gospel-centered parents run to the cross every day for mercy, forgiveness, and hope to reapply themselves to the task of parental fidelity.

Two Ways to Define the Gospel:

1. Bad News/Good News
2. Three Events: Creation/Fall/Redemption

Do we really love our kids?

Farley writes,

“the more affectionate a father, the more likely that his children will internalized his values.”

Ross Campbell writes, ‘Discipline is immeasurably easier when the child feels genuinely loved. . . . If a child doesn’t feel genuinely loved and accepted . . . he has real difficulty identifying with his parents and their values.’ . . . Campbell’s point is this: Unless children feel their parent’s love and acceptance, they will probably not internalize the lessons you are trying to teach them. Your worldview will not penetrate their hearts. The baton will not be transferred. Affection communicates love to your children – a love that is biblical.

1 Corinthians 13:1-3 ESV

1 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

3 If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Jonathan Edwards from Charity and Its Fruits:

“Love is that disposition or affection whereby one is dear to another; ... agape; ... Christian love.”

“When God and man are loved with a truly Christian love, they are both loved from the same motives. When God is loved aright, he is loved for his excellency, and the beauty of his nature, especially the holiness of his nature; and it is from the same motive that the saints are loved – for holiness’ sake. And all things that are loved with a truly holy love, are loved from the same respect to God. Love to God is the foundation of gracious love to men; and men are loved, either because they are in some respect like God, in the possession of his nature and spiritual image, or because of the relation they stand in to him as his children or creatures – as those who are blessed of him, or to whom his mercy is offered, or in some other way from regard to him.”

Verse 1 – *“The doctrine taught, then, is this: That all the virtue that is saving, and that distinguishes true Christians from others, is summed up in Christian love.” (Love is the sum of all Christian virtue!)*

“...contention is directly against that which is the very sum of all that is essential and distinguishing in true Christianity, even a spirit of love and peace. No wonder, therefore, that Christianity cannot flourish in a time of strife and contention among its professors. No wonder that religion and contention cannot live together.”

Verse 2 – *“Charity [love] is more excellent than the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit.”*

Verse 3 – *“The greatest performances or sufferings are in vain without charity [love] “*

“The apostle teaches, that not only our performances, but also our sufferings are of no avail without charity. Men are ready to make much of what they do, but more of what they suffer.”

Do we express our love?

1. Focused attention
2. Eye contact
3. Physical touch
4. Evidences of grace

Age of Opportunity (Paul David Tripp): Three Strategies for Parenting Teens (Ch 12)

1 Corinthians 10:13 ESV

13 No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

Three Strategies for Parenting Teens:

1. Project Parenting

Psalms 36:1-4 NIV

1 For the director of music. Of David the servant of the LORD. An oracle is within my heart concerning the sinfulness of the wicked: There is no fear of God before his eyes.

2 For in his own eyes he flatters himself too much to detect or hate his sin.

3 The words of his mouth are wicked and deceitful; he has ceased to be wise and to do good.

4 Even on his bed he plots evil; he commits himself to a sinful course and does not reject what is wrong.

The wicked are characterized by two deficiencies and these weaknesses endanger all of us, but they especially describe the deficiencies we seek to address in our teenagers' hearts:

- a. They do not live with "the fear of God before their eyes."
- b. The wicked "flatters himself too much."

So, what is the biblical goal(s) here?

- a. To produce teens who are "wise and good".

- b. To help them maintain an accurate knowledge of their current life situation.
- c. To prepare them to pursue godliness by helping them to detect and hate their own sin (verse 4).

2. Constant Conversation

Hebrews 3:12-13 NIV

12 See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.

13 But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

Four-fold warning here against turning away:

- a. Sinful heart – one that no longer desires to please God
- b. Unbelieving heart – loss of faith and confidence in God; one that does not trust in God's word
- c. Turning-away heart – forsaking communion and fellowship with God
- d. Hardened heart – insensitive to the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit

3. Leading Your Teenager to Repentance

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 NIV

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:

19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

"As parents, God has reconciled us to himself so that we would be his ambassadors of reconciliation. It is as though God makes his personal appeal to our teenagers through us! So we seek to lead our teenagers to the Lord with words of confession, with a commitment to repentance, and with hope in the effective work of Christ on the cross. We will not lead them to the Lord just once, but again and again and again, to receive his forgiveness and his help."

A. The first step is consideration

Ask: What is going on? (what is the situation?)

Ask: What were you thinking and feeling? (Id the heart response to the situation)

Ask: What did you do? (Behavior)

Ask: Why did you do it? (Motive)

Ask: What was the result? (Affect on you and others)

B. The second step is confession

C. The third step in leading our teenager to repentance is commitment

D. The final step of the repentance process is change