

- The answer is **THE GOSPEL**

- Our children are just like us: Sinners in need of a saviour.

- Parental priorities?

Romans 10:14

But how are they to call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?

D. QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL APPLICATION

1. Why is an understanding of the gospel so important to a proper foundation and motivation for parenting?

2. How have you viewed your children – as a precious gift from God, or an inconvenience and hardship? Why? What must you do to change this view?

3. How have you viewed your role and task as a parent – as a joy and privilege or as a heavy burden? Why? What must you do to change this view?

4. Do you have a clearly defined biblical vision for the convictions you want your children to possess when they are grown? Are there any cultural values you are prone to be influenced by which undermine biblical values when it comes to childrearing?

5. What are you doing to help your children avoid being moralistic with a thin veneer of Christianity when they are grown? Are there subtle ways in which you have emphasised good character (being self-sufficient) over holy living (being Gospel-centred)?

6. Do your goals and example commend a love for the local church? Are your children demonstrating they hold this value?

7. What are the top two or three prayer requests for yourself as a parent, desiring to train your children for the glory of God and for their good?

8. What are your top two or three requests for your children as you pursue the wonderful privilege of training them up in the way they should go?

- Our children are sinners!

Romans 3:10-12

As it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."

3. What is our children's greatest need?

- NOT Behaviourism

John MacArthur

"Certainly both manners and discipline are necessary aspects of proper parenting. But teaching our kids manners is no solution to the problem of human depravity. Tacking on punishment for wrongdoing won't solve the problem, either. In fact, parents who concentrate all their energies on correcting external behaviour, or staving off misbehaviour with threats of discipline, may be doing little more than training hypocrites."

- NOT Isolationism

John MacArthur

"Parents cannot – and should not – try to isolate their children totally from the truth about sin and the subtleties of temptation. We should not cultivate the kind of "innocence" in our children that leaves them vulnerable to the reality of evil and temptations they never imagined they would face. Our task is to teach them discernment, not raise them as prudes."

- NOT Self-esteem

John MacArthur

"The truth is that much of the modern effort to spark kids' self-esteem is simply pouring gasoline on a runaway fire. It encourages already selfish kids to think they are justified in wanting their own way. It makes parents think they must defer to the child, no matter what, because the child has a right to express himself freely, so that he feels good about himself. All this only escalates out-of-control behaviour and feeds the worst tendencies of human depravity."

- What is the one wish we desire for our children above all else?
 - Good education?
 - Successful career and prosperity?
 - Happiness?
 - Health?

2. The Goal of our parenting.

Grant Layman

“The goal of our parenting is to raise children who become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ and are committed to serving within the context of the local church.”

- The Goal of our parenting: *Raising children who understand their need of a saviour and respond in repentance and faith to Jesus Christ.*

J.C Ryle

“Precious, no doubt, are these little ones in your eyes; but if you love them, think often of their souls. No interest should weigh with you so much as their eternal interests. No part of them should be so dear to you as that part which will never die. The world, with all its glory, shall pass away; the hills will melt; the heavens shall be wrapped together as a scroll; the sun shall cease to shine. But the spirit which dwells in those little creatures, whom you love so well, shall outlive them all, and whether in happiness or misery (to speak as a man) will depend on you.”

- The central focus of our parenting must be the gospel.
- Directing the “Why” of sin as well as the “What”.

- How do you view your children?

2. Parenting is supposed to be a joy not a burden.

- Parenthood: A life of misery or life of joy?
- How do you view your God-given role and task as a parent?
- Are you focusing on “someday” and missing your calling “Today”?

C. BEING A PRO-ACTIVE PARENT

1. Being pro-active disciple makers rather than reactive correctors.

- We need a biblical vision of the task of parenting to inform the daily hard work, to help us stay focused so we might persevere.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Matthew 22:37

And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

2 Timothy 2:22

So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

Hebrews 10:23

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.



BIBLICAL PARENTING

Session #1

A. INTRODUCTION

1. The Crisis of Culture and the damaging effects on the family.

- Parenting: *Mission Impossible?*
- The promise of God's grace for our task.

2 Peter 1:3

"His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence"

John MacArthur

"What we desperately need is a return to the biblical principles of parenting. Christian parents don't need new, shrink-wrapped programs, they need to apply and obey consistently the few simple principles that are clearly set forth for parents in God's Word, such as these: Constantly teach your kids the truth of God's Word (Deuteronomy 6:7). Discipline them when they do wrong (Proverbs 23:13-14). Don't provoke them to anger (Colossians 3:21). Those few select principles alone, if consistently applied, would have a far greater positive impact for the struggling parent than issues that consume so much time in a typical parenting programme."

B. TWO FOUNDATIONS FOR PARENTING

1. Children are a blessing not a hardship.

Psalm 127:3-5

Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. 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.