

Parenting for Christ – Session 1

How the Gospel Shapes Family Life

I. God's Design for the Family

-Genesis 1:1, 26-28; 2:7-9, 15-3:21 and Revelation 22:1-5

1. God is the ultimate authority over everything
 2. God has designed families as a part of His larger eternal plan
 3. Marriage is the foundation of the family
 4. Husbands are the head of the family
 5. Children are an expected, blessed addition to the family
 6. Children are to be raised to leave and start their own family
 7. Sin has twisted and undermined everything God has designed (including every aspect of the family)
 8. The gospel is the ultimate (and only) hope for the world (and for the family)
- Family is one piece of God's larger eternal plan:
 - "God redeeming a people for His Son, by His Son, to His own Glory"
– Tom Pennington
 - Parenting is one piece of God's larger design for the family

God's design is that sinful parents:

- **BE** redeemed and transformed in Christ
- **DISPLAY** God's redeeming, transformative work in their lives to their families and world
- Be **INSTRUMENTS** of God's redeeming and transforming work in the lives of their children

II. What Makes a Good Parent?

Many think a good parent...

- = A perfect parent
- = Following the right methods or techniques
- = Entrusting their kids to other experts
- = Obedient children

Godly Parenting	Godly Parent
Our focus will tend toward what we DO as parents	Our focus will tend toward who we ARE as parents
Our focus will move toward our parenting METHODS	Our focus will first be on our HEARTS and MOTIVATIONS
Success will likely be determined by the RESULTS in the lives of our children	Success will be determined by our FAITHFULNESS in fulfilling our responsibility
We will tend to view parenting as a SEGREGATED part of life	We will tend to view parenting as RELATED to all of life
Deut. 6:7-9; Eph. 6:4; Ps. 145:4	Deut. 6:5-6; Eph. 1-3, 4:1, 5:18ff; Ps. 145:1-3, 5ff

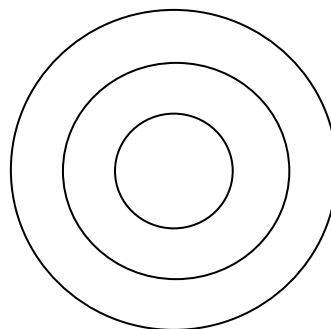
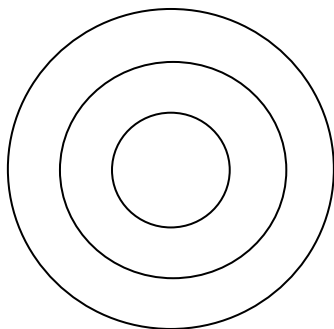
A Good Parent is...

- One who understands their **NEED** of Christ
- One who is saved by **FAITH** in Christ
- One who **FOLLOWS** and **OBEYS** Christ
- One whose greatest **TREASURE** is Christ
- One who is being **TRANSFORMED** into the image of Christ
- One who **REPRESENTS** Christ
- One who lives for the **GLORY** of Christ
- One who **DESIRES** those things for their children
- **A Christ-Centered Parent**

Child-Centered

vs.

Christ-Centered



A Good Parent is...

A Christ-Centered Parent

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Wise Parenting

III. Foundations of Wise Parenting: Truths in Tension

1. God's Sovereignty and Our Responsibility
 - Only God can change your child's heart
 - Parents are the primary means God uses to change a child's heart

2. Parenting Today with an eye to Tomorrow
 - Parenting is a long-term commitment that requires long-term (eternal) perspective
 - Parenting is the briefest of opportunities and each day must be seized

3. Parenting is about God using me to change my kids vs. Parenting is about God using my kids to change me
 - In every interaction with your kids, God desires to change them
 - In every interaction with your kids, God desires to change you

4. Modeling the Fatherhood of God while Being a Child of God
 - We are to be a model for our kids of the loving, authoritative Fatherhood of God
 - We are to be a model for our kids of a humble, dependent, submissive child of God

Questions for Reflection

1. Read back through Genesis 1-3. Are there any aspects of God's design for the family that were surprising to you? Any that you had lost sight of in your typical thinking about your family?
2. What have you typically thought of when you think of a good parent? How does this affect how you parent?
3. If an outside observer looked at your life (like your child), what would they say are the things you treasure most? How would they know? Where is Christ on this list?
4. By God's grace, what changes will you seek to make this week in order to be more Christ-centered (i.e. to treasure, glorify, live for, follow, hope in Christ or represent Christ)?
5. Based on what you consistently emphasize with you child/children and envision for their future, what would you say is your greatest desire for your child/children? Are your greatest desires Christ-centered?
6. Which truth of each of the "truths in tension" do you tend to think more about? What impact does that have on your parenting?