

PARENT CONNECTION:

GOSPEL-CENTERED FAMILIES



WHAT IS A GOSPEL-CENTERED FAMILY?

ANSWERS FROM YOU ON 10-23-16:

- “Where the things we do as a family, and the ways we behave towards each other as a family, reflects God’s love.”– Rachel
- “A family that has right priorities and a good focus on things above.”
–Matthew
- “I think that with kids, giving them a foundation and letting them make choices while they’re still under your tutorship so they can learn to experience failure or success, trying to give them gospel confidence that they can be confident in who their Savior is, and who is informing their life decisions. That’s the ground work.” – Emil

GOSPEL-CENTERED FAMILIES

- “Sometimes we have the Christian idea that the Gospel means living in “perfection”, but the truth of the Gospel is that it is loving people in their brokenness...” —Stephanie
- “The gospel is in the center of everything you do, rather than on the outskirts. If you draw a circle around where your family is, the center is where the Gospel is. That is where everything is focused, so it’s not like you just live your life during the week and then on Sundays you go to church. The focus of your life is on the Gospel and then everything that comes out of that comes from the Gospel instead of out of your own ideas.” —Ben

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

MARK 1:15

“Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” Mark 1:15

Jesus begins His ministry declaring that God’s kingdom rule is not about ruling over land, but ruling over people’s hearts. He says that His reign is at hand, and people should repent and believe in Him—the Good News!

People had seen earthly kingdoms where God governed through laws, judges and prophets. Now Jesus establishes his reign in the hearts of mankind through His Spirit. His will be a kingdom no armies can conquer.

GOD'S RULE = BLESSING

Under the Old Covenant:

Welcoming God's rule = blessing through God's protection and provision, peace in the land, anticipation of a stable future

Rejecting God's rule = judgment, captivity, conflict, destruction

Under the New Covenant:

Welcoming God's rule = blessing of salvation through Jesus, peace in our heart through indwelling Spirit of God

Rejecting God's rule = inner conflict, separation from God, eternal destruction

HOW CAN WE BE A GOSPEL-CENTERED PARENTS?

Our willingness to recognize and submit to God as the Author & Perfector of our faith (Hebrews 12:1-2), and who has authority in all things (Matthew 26:18) influences our role as parent-models.

We help our children to learn to submit to our authority—an authority they can see, hear and touch so they can learn to submit to God whom they cannot see, hear and touch in the same way.

GOSPEL-CENTERED PARENTS:

- model both God's authority and His grace to their children. Parents recognize that not only are their children learning to bow their hearts to the Savior, but they, too, as parents, are always learning to bow their hearts in recognition and admission of Jesus' Kingship.

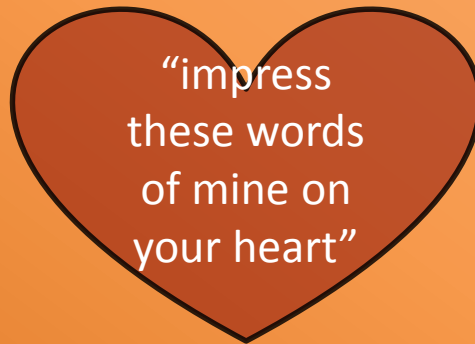
GOSPEL-CENTERED PARENTS:

- admit to their children that even as adults they share in the same human struggle against their flesh, and that they receive the same saving grace through Jesus' sacrifice.
- help their children understand that they are not the kings and queens of their own lives so they learn to submit to the One and only King.
- seek God's solutions with their children through prayer, wisdom, and action by the power of His Word and His Spirit.
- endeavor to model that God's authority is good, liberating, protective and gracious.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How, on earth, do we keep God in the center of our homes, our work, our lives, of everything when our lives are crazy-busy?

IT'S A MATTER OF THE HEART



As we relinquish our hearts to the work of the Master through the power of His Word and the work of His Spirit, He uses us as tools of influence the lives of our children, families, friends, co-workers.

IMPRESS THESE WORDS ON YOUR HEART..

¹⁸ “You shall therefore **impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul**; and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.

¹⁹ You shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up. ²⁰ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, ²¹ so that your days and the days of your sons may be multiplied ...” Deuteronomy 11:18-21

WATCH OVER YOUR HEART with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life. Proverbs 4:23

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

What are the ways you impress God's words on your heart and on your soul?

What are the ways you impress God's words on your child's heart?

JAME'S ADVICE

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.” James 1:22-25

A PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF JAMES 1:22-25:

READ YOUR BIBLE. "... whoever looks intently ..."

REVIEW THE BIBLE. "... and continues in it ..."

REMEMBER THE BIBLE. "... not forgetting what
they have heard ..."

RESPOND TO THE BIBLE. "... but doing it ..."

A BEFORE AND AFTER ADDITION TO THE METHOD:

→ RECOGNIZE OUR NEED FOR HIS HELP ...Pray..

READ YOUR BIBLE. "... whoever looks intently ..."

REVIEW THE BIBLE. "... and continues in it ..."

REMEMBER THE BIBLE. "... not forgetting what they have heard ..."

RESPOND TO THE BIBLE. "... but doing it ..."

→ RECOGNIZE OUR NEED FOR HIS HELP ...Pray..

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Teaching goes on long after Bible time with your children. How do children observe God's Word at work in you through:

- Relationships?
- Hardships?
- Activities?

RELATIONSHIPS

Based on what your children hear and observe, how would they see you reflect the Word of God through your

- marriage?
- work relationships?
- friendships in and outside your neighborhood?
- relationship with the members of the body of Christ?

HARDSHIPS

In what ways would your children see you reflect the Word of God as you face

- personal hardships?
- life's pressures?
- failures?
- sorrows?
- illness?

ACTIVITIES

In what ways would your children see you reflect the Word of God in the activities you choose for yourself and your family?

In what ways would your children see you reflect the Word of God as you lead in celebrations like Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter?

PSALM 78--THE DECLARATION OF DISCIPLESHIP

Listen, O my people, to my instruction;

Incline your ears to the words of my mouth...

⁴ We will not conceal them from their children,

But tell to the generation to come the praises of the LORD,

And His strength and His wondrous works that He has done...

⁵ That they should teach them to their children,

⁶ That the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born,

That they may arise and tell them to their children,

⁷ That they should put their confidence in God

And not forget the works of God,

But keep His commandments,

⁸ And not be like their fathers,

A stubborn and rebellious generation,

A generation that did not prepare its heart

And whose spirit was not faithful to God.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How much do you value making the Word of God a part of your daily life?

How does your behavior reflect or not reflect your deeply held values?

What?

Outward Behavior-external expression of what we value and believe

How?

- Our behavior is influenced by :
- our perceived and actual limitations
 - our core beliefs which are shaped by our culture, upbringing, temperament, Bible influence, etc. many of which we may not be aware we are influenced by

Why?

Ultimately, our actions/behavior reflect our deepest values and commitments. If our behavior doesn't line up with what we think we value, we have a gap (discrepancy) between what we say we value and what we do.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How do I eliminate the gap between what I say I value and what I do?

The attached worksheet can help you to identify your values by what you do.

How do they line up?

What adjustments do you need to make?

SAMPLE WORKSHEET

1. What is your deeply held value, commitment or desire?

I want to read, pray and interact with God's word to such a degree that through it his spirit shapes me to be undeniably to be like Him.

2. What circumstances/situations currently limit you or help you to fulfill this value?

- ***What limits me:***

- *A busy schedule*
- *Hectic mornings, tired at night*
- *I don't love reading*
- *When I read, I'm distracted by responsibilities, thoughts, demands (real and imposed).*
- *I get bored sitting still*
- *I have doubts about the power of my prayers*

- ***What helps me:***

- *Audio YouVersion Bible app. to listen to while I do tasks, jog, exercise*
- *Devotionals sent with reminders*
- *Reading in different languages Running outdoors—pray, memorize*
- *Esvbibleonline that has easy access commentary*
- *Teaching Sunday school--accountability*

3. What behaviors do you want to implement in your life to fulfill this value, commitment or desire?

- *Create a manageable daily plan/method of engaging God's word*
- *Memorize a verse segment regularly*
- *Seek accountability in memorizing*
- *Schedule undistracted time to pray and read*
- *Review scripture when Jesus prays*
- *Ask God to help me to be disciplined*
- *Ask God to show me creative ways to interact with his Word*
- *Ask for His spirit to intercede in my life and to show me the break down in my beliefs/values*

4. What are you currently doing to accomplish this value?

5. What ways can you accomplish what you desire that may be outside of what your ordinarily think?

6. How does your current behavior reflect or not reflect your value?

7. What beliefs or attitudes create the gap between what you say you deeply value and how you live out what you value?

8. What can you do to eliminate the gap?

COLOSSIANS 3:16

¹⁶ Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Colossians 3:16