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00:01 Lance: I am Lance Wigton, I am the Communications Director here at Real Wife Ministries – and welcome to the companion podcast to the Revolutionary Disciple – and Jim this one you wanted to do because it is on a big topic in a small spot which is the home sphere. And you have had a lot of people over the years, especially the last I would say 10 – ask specific questions about what is going on in their home and really some heartbreaks about how their kids maybe have – they feel like landed in a different place than they thought they were going to – and what to do about it. And so, you wanted to do some additional content to talk about this for, basically we are targeting young families, so that they don't fall prey to maybe what some other families have already. So, what we're talking about today is the design for the home. Tell us a little about what God's design for the home is – and the home sphere.

01:09 Jim: Yeah, actually you are right – my dad and I wrote a book called "Hope for the Prodigal," and it is all about – OK, how do you keep your kid from being a prodigal, and what you do once they are a prodigal. And so, you are right, I was a prodigal, and my son was a prodigal. And – ultimately we are all prodigal's. Because we all fell short of the glory of God. But, looking at some of my mistakes – other people's mistakes – looking at some of what went well – and what went right – has played a huge part in my perspective of all this. The Home Sphere is outlined in Ephesians 5:21 – first of Ephesians 6. And the design, you know we talk about this week in the sermon is – the Home Sphere if you are single – chastity – if you're married – you know faithfulness, husband and wife and there is order – husband is the head of the household, wife is a partner in all that – and the job is to raise up your children – Ephesians 6:2. In the instruction of the Lord. And I wanted to talk about this part because we have so many young families coming to our church right now – and we have sports ministry and all these different ministries and I wanted to talk about what is the role of the parent? And you know one of the things that happens today in parenting is that our job is to – you know – figure out what our kids dream is and help them achieve it. To affirm whatever their dream is and God's word doesn't say that. God's word says that as a parent, my job is to train them up in the instruction of the Lord. All the way through I'm going to train them, I'm going to teach them, I'm going to lead them in the instruction of the Lord. The Bible says that in the heart of a child, there is foolishness. Bound up in the heart of a child. And our job is the rod of correction or training drives it far from them. Scripture says that children are broken, and our job is to lead them to salvation in Christ and discipleship. We are disciple makers in the home. And so the question then is what does that look like? Especially when our kids have peers, there are so many things that they could be doing that seem like they are good things. Sports, and how do we interact with sports. Especially when we live in a culture where so many of the parents – sports with a huge deal and you know it shape them. I was one of those kids, my identity was – I'm a wrestler – I am an athlete – that was my identity. And, so what does it look like to say know your identity is in Christ, you are a Christ follower, we live for eternity – we are in the world but not of it – how do I train them and lead them – contrary to what their friends in the culture are leading them to do. How do I go alright I'm going to use these different opportunities to direct my children to something versus let these coaches these people who have differing views these friends this world – use my kid to help shape their identity.

04:43 Lance: I think that is a great point – I think we talk about you know guiding them in a particular direction – and I just don't want – because I know that statement for you is not black and white – there is the end goal which is a disciple of Jesus – and it maturing – not only maturing as an adult is a

human – but maturing to be more Christlike. I understand that is the end destination. However, we also know that God makes children, even from the same family, just graphically different. Different interests, talents, abilities. And so, it is OK to understand not necessarily how you want them to be, what kind of how God made them and try and help them on that path. And so that for you I absolutely think was wrestling. I think because of wrestling you did better in school you were a better citizen in school... [Jim interjects "no – no"] not a better citizen?

05:51 Jim: The wrestling – certainly I graduated from school – because if I didn't pass the classes, I wasn't going to be able to wrestle. But that didn't make me a better citizen. I was a drunk – I was violent – I was ungodly in every stretch of the imagination – being a wrestler did not mean good citizen – did not mean obedient to my parents – it did not mean safe – it meant violent, and it meant all of those things. And I think that is an important distinction. Are the things that I did learn that were positive in sports? You know yes, stamina – work hard – attention to detail in some areas right, but unfortunately many of the coaches identity was in I'm a coach of this sport. And I want to be the coach of the year. I want to be great, so, they wanted me to become the best I could be – sometimes I mean I'm not going to say all of them – because it would make me a good citizen they thought. But when did being good at wrestling or being good at football make you mentally stable. I mean we're looking at pro athletes all the time, are they mentally stable? Are they good human beings? I mean they made a paycheck for a while but what happens with money, when you get money it just allows you to buy what you think you want. And so if you have broken desires – right? That doesn't do anything other than allow me to spend what I want on my pleasures – that doesn't make me godly. So, the question is how do we take something that could be good, sports, or music... to your point. If your kid is not a sports guy and you are a sports guy, your job should be – OK God made my kid different – don't make you feel bad that these differences with what his gifts and abilities are, but just like that say my kid is musical. Does that mean that I go OK – I'm going to hand my kid over to the music teachers, who their identity might be that I am a Symphony leader and I want to be the best Symphony leader in the world so I need to train you to be the greatest violinist so that you – so that I can be known as the greatest teacher ever – and I can have a symphony that is so good – because that is my identity, I need you to help me achieve my identity. There are all kinds of people out there who will train your kids in all different kinds of things, and some of that is good. They should learn to use gifts and abilities and all that – but for what purpose to what end? And what is the goal? The goal... I have people that go OK I need my kid to get good at sports because then he can get a scholarship and maybe go to the pros. So they will spend all of their time in the backyard. Or, they will take the kids all over to symphonies, or to acting classes or whatever, so that they can get a scholarship for whatever it is right.

So now here's the thing about coaches they want you there five days a week – it used to be play multiple sports but now – now they want you at their camps – they want you to go year-round – these do not play on Sundays, now they play on Sundays. So now because you want them to get a scholarship or to go to the pros and by the way very few people ever get any of those things – but parents always think their kid is the one right? And so, even if they're right I want to send them to a college – on scholarship – so they can do this or do that right? The problem with that is if you spend all your time training them in football, wrestling, or softball, or soccer, do you know what is going to happen to that kid when he gets to school? If he is not ready to deal with Critical Race Theory, transgenderism, homosexuality... when they go to a class they're not going to let me explain how God created the world, they are saying you are going to learn evolution so that you know that you are actually random accidental process – you are going to go do a sociology class that is going to teach them that Christianity is the source of all problems in the world and it's a myth. That it is the source of bigotry. So now you want to make happy... my kid... needs a scholarship so he can get a job. And so

I'm going to do – use all my time to talk about sports and talk about, we're going to go to this game and that game – and we're going to go all over, and so they don't really actually have a relationship in the church – they go to church when there isn't something going – you know a sport going on – and they don't really have relationship with kids – which is why by the way 85% of kids who go to church usually typically parents only take them 1.1 times a month, and not any small group. Parents go to church, based on a national average, the kids are not in youth group – they don't really have relational friends – their peer group is their sports group. So that's where they go. The Bible says bad company corrupts good morals – you become like the people around you so, maybe they are even decent kids right? They're just sports kids. But sports kids don't get pregnant right? Sports kids don't do drugs right? Sports kids don't have sex outside of marriage, sports kids don't commit suicide or you know have mental illness... no, no, no – none of is that right! No, you are spending the time getting your kids connected with an identity and a lifestyle that doesn't lead to eternity – because you didn't train them in the admonishment of the Lord – put Jesus first in front of everything else – Jesus just fits in when there's time – and you actually support it. Until then they go off to college and they come back and you are like hey – it is Christmas let's go to church together – I don't believe in God. Or, then they come back and say you know what I think I'm having these feelings and these thoughts – same-sex attractions – so I am not going to... and you go WHAT! that is not how I raised you. And that's not what... No that's exactly how you raise them.

12:00 Lance: And that is your point – the design is that they are going to be maturing towards Christ, not – actually not anything else – we don't even care about anything else – but I think there is a couple – there are ways to do this – there is a way to do this. So let's talk about that. Because I mean – whoa, that's scary – now it is a cautionary tale – I have little kids (I don't have little kids...) My kids have little kids – and so how do I not – I have heard about this I don't want that how do we get involved. And I think there are a couple of phases. I think the parent – and you know if I'm wrong you tell me – but I think the parent first has to go... What am I worshiping? And...

12:50 Jim: And what is my end goal? Personally and for my family.

12:53 Lance: If I am worshiping God, and I'm worshiping the lives because I worship God, and I love God, and I trust God – I also am going to trust His design and His words for my family today – just like they were sent 2000 years ago – it is still true. And regardless of all these other things. And I believe that if I do that my kids will end up all right, even though the world is changed – even in our generation – you know since my kids were grown. The other thing to do is I think there is a way to use their journey, their music, their sports – it isn't all bad, you don't keep your kid in a refrigerator – or a box and don't let them go outside – what do you do with – I guess – what I'm trying to say what are you worshiping and the second thing is – you can use that as a vehicle to get – to grow them up and prioritize life in the future. And so maybe talk a little bit about that.

13:58 Jim: well, first of all an abiding relationship with Jesus keeps me centered in who I am, and what's important, and who God is. That eternity is not just 70 years, it is not just a job you have where you make money – my identity isn't even in how well my kids do it is in Christ – so I am worshiping Jesus, not a sport. I am also understanding the enemy. We don't wrestle against flesh and blood, we're going to talk about that later on, but against spiritual forces. We live in a world that is trying to shape us into its mold, we no longer conform to the patterns of this world Romans 12 says, but we are transformed by the renewing of our mind. As I am transformed by the renewing of my mind, alright I know the end goal, I know the enemy, I know what I have to have my kids ready for. I am not saying

you shouldn't send your kids to college, I'm saying don't send your kids to college if they are not ready spiritually to be able to answer attacks that they are going to get. That is not a safe zone anymore.

14:58 Lance: Right, I agree with that...

15:00 Jim: Not peers, these peers are completely different. These coaches have different value systems. The classes they are going to take they are not ambiguous – they have an intent... you need to know they have an intent you need to know your role as a parent, you need to prepare your children to raise up – train them up in the instruction of the Lord. That is my job, and as I abide, I know who I am in Christ, I know the church's role is to help do all of that – I may be a part of the church where they build relationships – like ropes that hold them fast, so they have Christian relationships that are giving them Christian support – you need that – so as I abide in Christ, I am in the church now I understand my role – I am with Jesus, I am with the church to raise up my children – now – with my kids. They wanted to be in football, they wanted my kid to go to camp and to do football year-round – or they wanted him to do wrestling year-round – and my son was like no we are going to youth group – we're going to have devotions every day – we're going to be in church on the weekends – you are going to build those relationships – when you say there is a camp, instead of church camp... No... No, I have a goal for my kid. I know you have a goal for my kid, you want him to be the best... whatever. So you can be a winning coach. And you might even have good intentions. This is the best thing for kids, but look at the pros, that is the top of the top. Do you really want your kid to act and live like the pros? OK... no. I have something bigger – I have a goal in mind – as I abide in Christ, I am reminded of that. I can't let... and a lot of parents, they want to live vicariously through their kids – so they wish they could have been this or that – and... no, no, no... This is something that they can do that teaches them character, it is not going to define them as best I can. When my kid, all the kids at school are going why aren't you coming to this? There is this peer pressure, they want to fit in. They feel bad that their friends don't want to go to church camp with them they feel bad that they don't get to go do this and they don't get to do that – and my heartstrings are – and I don't want you to feel different, and I need to follow you and support you... No! No!... I am the leader, and my job is to lead them and steward them towards Christ. I don't follow them right? And so how do I use... if they are musical, and they want to go to their music lessons and hang out with their music peers – start a band with their guys – because we all know a band can make you safe you know – there's nothing bad that happens – all the good kids do the music. No, no, no – there are broken people everywhere I don't mind using music to teach you some skills. God may have given you that ability but He wanted you to use it for Him. And why would I want you to get really good at the ability but not have the heart that wants to use it for Him? Now again I can't choose for them what they are going to do – I am not responsible for what they do – I am responsible for what I do with them. And so I can't let my job define me so I have no time to help them understand life as a parent. Because again work sphere, we are going to get to that, a lot of times we work so hard because our family needs money. No, the family needs Jesus. That is my identity. Or that is my bosses identity and he wants me to fulfill his identity. No, no, no... I am going to put that in the right as I abide in Christ, that keeps that at the right size so that I have time in the home to play the part that God called me to play in the home. And I just – I'm so tired of losing our kids – I'm so tired of families being brokenhearted and disappointed, because they didn't – they just handed their kid over to a coach hoping... Will something good will happen – or teacher – and they abdicated their own role of being a disciple maker who first leads the way where they want their kids to go – if you want your kids to have relationships in the church and a relationship with Jesus – you lead the way. They see you do it – they see that the relationships you have there – so they see the value of it. You say no I'm sorry you don't get to go do whatever you want. There will be a day when you

do, and I hope you choose to do what God shows you to do. But I am not going to support you and follow you to use the sport, your gifts and abilities the way your friends or your coaches or the world wants to use it. I'm going to lead you... and if they say well – like some of them are – when you can be on my team, because you won't go year-round. That is why we started the sports program. To say use the sport as a good tool. Don't let these coaches dictate your identity and control – now I can't use sports at all because you say I have to use it all or I have to give in because no support at all because they will... No – we are going to come up with a medium ground, and it may be that I am a wrestler but there are no wrestling coaches that won't you not allow me to be on the team if you don't go full time. Then I just choose something else because my identity is not a wrestler, whatever the sport is, I will use it as a tool to raise my children to know Jesus.

20:22 Lance: Right, I think that's a great point. They're going to do whatever they are going to do, whatever their interests are going to be, whatever – you know just like all of us we're going to find it. However it's a vehicle not a destination. The destination is still maturing Christian, and has their own relationship – it's not your relationship – is their relationship – and it has been handed over as they have grown – and now because eventually they're going to leave home – they are going to go and do their own thing. Jim I think that's really good, and I agree with all those points. I am just thinking about, there is a couple of parent groups that are listening to this and I am worried that we left them hanging. One of the things is that if I am a young family – I am a young dad – what does the church offered for me right now that can help this? Because I'm not sure what that looks like – I'm abiding, but you know – it takes a church.

21:22 Jim: I think it's children's ministry – right you get your kids plugged in early relationally – you want to start building friendships. But you don't just hand them over to teachers and don't discuss what they talked about later. It's a jumping off... Hey what did you learn today? And we start partnering with them – the most important thing is what happens all week long jumping off of what they learned and driving at home. And being aware of what is being taught – we have all kinds of sports ministries – we have a creative arts ministry. We have Trail Life Scouting ministries – these are all opportunities for parents to use that as a tool to get involved – each one of those groups that we have – there is a lesson we are trying to teach – we're trying to say your identity is not in the sport, this is a place for you to play – the coaches care about the character – we're trying to guide them into relationships again – relationships are like ropes that hold kids fast you want to help them build positive peer relationships. Just as bad company corrupts good morals, good company produces good morals. You want them in youth group – but you don't just send them to use group you're like what did you learn in youth group? You try to have relationships – we have Bill Krause who is coming back and one of the things he is known for is using these kind of ceremonies to help your kid move into adulthood with other believers. We are in life groups where these people – kids are seeing you in relationship and connecting with other adults with group leaders – you are trying to have both the corporate part where you can interact with other believers – and the individual part with your own relationships with them – where at the end of the day you are trying to build into them the preparedness for what they are going to face in the world – which is a full onslaught through social media, the movies, the school, the peers. If you underestimate what the devil is doing you will not do your part. And again you can do your part, and your kid has to decide. But the best chance they have of deciding rightly is for you to do your part and so you know I wrote the book with my dad "Hope for the Prodigal" because they go away for a while, and there are some things that we can do to draw them back – but, and we may even

have made some mistakes. I mean there are people that have made mistakes, and now they are grandparents...

23:51 Lance: Yeah, that was the second group of people I was going to talk about, now you're listening to this and you're like – OK, now I'm just filled with shame because what will I do now, I have made mistakes, I see what my mistakes are but it doesn't help me. Or my grandkids.

24:04 Jim: Well it does if you go OK I can't do anything in the past, but I can start going you know what here's what I learned – here is what I did wrong – I wish I had done it this way – and not only that, but I'm going to step in and go hey how can I support that. And so I can have a conversation and get involved in your kids life instead of taking off to leave your grandkids to chase the white ball as a snowbird – you are involving your kids life – and continue doing grandparenting and those kinds of things. And not only that, we're not just talking about our own personal family – many of the group leaders we have that work with kids and teens are those people not only do I have time now to try and what I did wrong before – but I now have the ability to help the church community – the brothers and sisters in Christ – the community to help support Scouting – where is not just about getting the deer teaching them to get the deer because my identity is how big and deer God – no it is about what we learn out here about God about who we are what our values really in – what is relationship look like – what does it look like in sports to be a coach that understand sports, that may have been pushed too hard early on, but now can go you know what that kid, who isn't a great athlete, is a child of God, and that kid who is a great athlete, what does he need to know about what really matters? We get to invest in the community of people together that points people to something beyond what the world tries to get us tied up into. And so we want to be in the world and not of it.

25:35 Lance: Well, it's really good stuff, especially I knew you said it at the point I just know that so many younger people are used to not even getting their own fast food they are having their food delivered and we're just expecting to click everything done – and so it's like you drop the kids off – that is good, what their interests are are going to be the vehicle not the destination so that's good being here. But really it is a help not the end destination. We still have to do our part, and we have classes online, or we have classes that you can find out when they're available online. And we have a lot of different resources – the biggest thing is to get involved and get involved now, and for – just as you said it was a great point – with older people that have already raised their kids may be seen their mistakes – God is the Redeemer – He can redeem that situation for you and get involved, help other people and basically get going in the right direction – and see what God can do with your relationships with other people and hopefully your relationships with your kids. I'm excited to hear this weekend's sermon about the home sphere, because it's been a great series so far Jim – and the book is great, I encourage you to get that book on Amazon if you haven't already – it is going to get you in these right directions like Jim talks about and thanks for doing this.

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