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PARENTING: WHAT DO WE DO WITH THEM NOW?

- Parenting is discipleship
 - There is no relationship in the world better suited to make disciples

Every parent can disciple their children by applying 3 godly principles - Be _____,

Be _____, Be _____

- Not everyone has physical children, but the goal of every Believer should be to have spiritual children

1 Corinthians 4:14-17 (NLT) *I am not writing these things to shame you, but to warn you as my beloved children. ¹⁵ For even if you had ten thousand others to teach you about Christ, you have only one spiritual father. For I became your father in Christ Jesus when I preached the Good News to you. ¹⁶ So I urge you to imitate me. ¹⁷ That's why I have sent Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord. He will remind you of how I follow Christ Jesus, just as I teach in all the churches wherever I go.*

- Paul also encouraged his spiritual children to do the same thing. (Titus 2:1-7)

Parenting is dynamic

- Parenting different ages and (both physically and spiritually)
- There are so many different styles of parenting
- Every kid is different. Something that worked with one kid may not necessarily work with another • Even with all these dynamic factors, God has some things that apply to all of us

1) BE _____

- God's goal for parents – to raise godly children (Malachi 2:15)
- Just telling kids what to do doesn't work. We have to tell them *and* model for them.

Deuteronomy 6:4-7 (NLT) *"Listen, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. ⁵ And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. ⁶ And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. ⁷ Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up.*

2) BE _____

- We've all heard the statement "**More is caught than taught.**" While this is probably true, if you are unintentional, chances are, they are going to catch the wrong things!
 - The importance of intentionality applies to spiritual parenting as well.
- One way to be intentional - Discipline your kids

Proverbs 13:24 (NLT) *Those who spare the rod of discipline hate their children. Those who love their children care enough to discipline them.*

- The rod, from a shepherd's point of view, was to keep the sheep safe. It was used to guide the sheep along safe paths, rescue them from danger, and defend them against predators.

Proverbs 22:6 (KJV) *Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.* ○

This isn't meant to be a formula. It is a general principle.

- Another way we can parent intentionally is to actively guide them in knowing who God is

Psalm 78:4-7 (NLT) We will not hide these truths from our children; we will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the Lord, about his power and his mighty wonders. ⁵ For he issued his laws to Jacob; he gave his instructions to Israel. He commanded our ancestors to teach them to their children, ⁶so the next generation might know them - even the children not yet born - and they in turn will teach their own children. ⁷ So each generation should set its hope anew on God, not forgetting his glorious miracles and obeying his commands.

- Share God's truths
 - Share your story – the Good and bad. Tell why your life with God is better than without

3) BE _____

- I don't know of anything in life that takes more consistent intentionality than trying to be like Jesus. ○ We'll never be perfect at it, but we are supposed to try. (*Ephesians 4:21-24, 1 Corinthians 11:1*)
- When we allow ourselves to become more like Jesus, amazing things happen!

Galatians 5:22-23 (ESV) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

- Practical ways we act like Jesus as parents?

Ephesians 6:4 (NLT) Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.

- What are ways parents provoke (exasperate) their kids?
 - Favoritism, comparison, being overbearing and overprotective, always looking for imperfections, pushing for achievement too much, being a hypocrite
- Admit when you are wrong and ask for forgiveness from your kids
- Parenting biblically is worth it! And it is never too late to start.
 - If not with your own physical children, how about God's children, others in the church? • Start now, biblically parenting who you can

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- As you reflect on God's goal for parents – to have godly offspring, how does that impact how you engage with your own children?
- Is there someone in your life that you are, or need to be, a spiritual parent to? Who? • Of the 3 godly principals, which ones do you think you do well at, and which do you struggle with? • What is the most personally challenging or convicting part of this message?
- Where do you see God's part, our part and other's part play out in this message?
- What is one next step you can take from this message and who can you apply it to?

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