

# “SUCCESS IN PARENTING”

## 5<sup>th</sup> in Series: Searching For Success

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### INTRODUCTION:

In the beginning of this new century, a Christian statesman concluded a 50-yr. study of Christian and non-Christian families. He says that in American culture today most young adults following Jesus Christ either come from non-Christian homes where they were converted to Christ in their teenage years through a dynamic youth ministry, or they come from homes where they grew up in love with Jesus because mom and dad were so in love with Jesus that love permeated their lives. Very few believers come from homes where there was a kind of indifferent, apathetic commitment to Christ. It is sobering and thought provoking to suggest that, in American culture, the chances are better for a child growing up in a non-Christian home to become a Christian than for a child growing up in a home that has an indifferent, apathetic commitment to Jesus Christ.

(cited by Ron Lee Davis, “*Introducing Christ to Your Child*,” Preaching Today, tape #92)

Howard Hendricks writes: “*Like a sand castle on the water's edge in a rising tide, the Christian family stands in a precarious position. What started as a sporadic spray that slowly pocked the walls of family values has now become the crashing waves of mainstream American society. . . Today, the waves rise even higher . . . The walls of isolation we have so carefully constructed are no longer guaranteed to keep out antifamily values and influences. . . Do we give up? Do we retreat even further? Is it time to hide our light under a bushel to keep it from being extinguished by the waves of a degenerate society? Or perhaps, with our frigate badly damaged and facing a larger foe asking for surrender, we answer back like John Paul Jones 'We have not yet begun to fight.'* . . . As parents, we no longer have the luxury of long-distance warfare . . . and letting the 'professionals' do the dirty work. Parents must be intimately involved in hand-to-hand combat, spending more effort at becoming models of Christian health and more time with their children, infecting them with personal exposure to Christian values.” (foreword to Guiding Your Family In A Misguided World, by Dr. Anthony T. Evans)

**Our children will become what they see, hear and learn from their parents, teachers and culture.** When it comes to successful parenting, there are NO shortcuts. **It requires an intentional and relentless commitment to raising our children God's Way and at the cost of plenty of time, hard work, sacrifice, blood, sweat, and tears!**

Zig Ziglar reminds us: “*Our children are our only hope for the future, but we are their only hope for their present and their future.*”

### PRAYER

### BIBLICAL KEYS TO PARENTING SUCCESS

#### 1.) Recognize The **World** For What It is: **Corrupt**

- ALL that is natural and 'normal' in this world is the result of generations upon generations of growing corruption under the curse of sin!
- This world is NOT a safe place, it is NO longer inherently good, and it is NOT trustworthy!

**Acts 2:40** *And with many other words he testified and strongly urged them, saying, "Be saved from this corrupt generation!"*

- The world's corruption is especially concerned with the equal corruption of God's children.

**Ephesians 6:12** *For our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world powers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens.*

**2 Timothy 3:1-8** *But know this: difficult times will come in the last days. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, without love for what is good, traitors, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to the form of religion but denying its power. Avoid these people! For among them are those who worm their way into households and capture idle women burdened down with sins, led along by a variety of passions, always learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.*

- Our children are under daily threats of exposure to and even bombardment from our culture's corrupt values, idols and temptations! They are on TV, on the radio, in the movies, throughout the news, flaunted on the streets, and even taught in many of our schools.
- Our children are easily influenced by what society tells them are important.
- The world and everything natural to it is diametrically opposed to our godly purpose and success as parents. WE may neglect the spiritual discipleship of our children, but have no doubt that the devil and the world do not!

**2 Peter 1:4** *By these He has given us very great and precious promises, so that through them you may share in the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world because of evil desires.*

- Dr. Tony Evans writes: "A family's ability to overcome the world's destructive pressure is directly related to the position of authority Christ has in the household. Satan understood this, and that's why he challenged God's authority in the garden with Adam and Eve. He knew that if they became their own gods setting their own agenda, their family would be destroyed . . . People living independent of God's direction over their lives make up their own rules of what maleness and femaleness are all about, which brings disaster to the home and the culture . . . The deterioration of our culture morally and spiritually is no fluke. We're paying the price in our children for the failure of their parents to function in accordance with God's ordained purpose and plan for family life." (Guiding Your Family In A Misguided World, pp. 19-21)

## 2.) Multiply His **Image**

- THIS is the primary purpose given from the beginning to mankind generally and through God's institution of families specifically.

**Genesis 1:26-28** *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the animals, all the earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth." So God created man in His own image; He created him in the image of God; He created them male and female. God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls on the earth."*

**2 Corinthians 3:18** *We all, with unveiled faces, are reflecting the glory of the Lord and are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the Spirit.*

**Colossians 3:10** ... put on the new man, who is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of his Creator.

– To fail to raise children who reflect God's image and continue to grow in the fullness and accuracy of that reflection is to fail in our most important purpose and function as parents!

### 3.) Complete His **Body**

– God's plan and desire for us and our children is not simply that we reflect a mere part of His image, but that with each passing day we display it more completely!  
– How?

#### A.) Through **Relationships**

– How we interact with one another in reflection of the Trinity.  
– This should be true both in our biological families and in our church family.

**Genesis 2:18** *Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is like him."*

**Hebrews 10:24-25** *And let us be concerned about one another in order to promote love and good works, staying away from our meetings, as some habitually do, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day drawing near.*

#### B.) Through **Devotion**

**2 Corinthians 11:3** *But I fear that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your minds may be corrupted from a complete and pure devotion to Christ.*

**Ephesians 5:25-32** *Husbands, love your wives, just as also Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her, to make her holy, cleansing her in the washing of water by the word. He did this to present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and blameless. In the same way, husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hates his own flesh, but provides and cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, since we are members of His body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This mystery is profound, but I am talking about Christ and the church.*

**Psalms 128:1-6** *How happy is everyone who fears the LORD, who walks in His ways! You will surely eat what your hands have worked for. You will be happy, and it will go well for you. Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house, your sons, like young olive trees around your table. In this very way the man who fears the LORD will be blessed. May the LORD bless you from Zion, so that you will see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life, and will see your children's children! Peace be with Israel.*

– Notice, the key is having the right environment and atmosphere for growth!

**Illustration:** Consider an account from The Gideon: *I vividly recall attending a Rotary meeting in Illinois a few years ago with my friend Gypsy Smith. I was sitting next to him at the speaker's table when suddenly just before he arose to speak, he asked me to mark carefully his closing words. When*

the moment arrived he lifted high his well-worn Bible. "How many of you men can recall a saintly mother and a godly father who loved this Book, read it, lived it, and seeped it into you?" Practically the entire group, with moist eyes, raised their hands. Then, quietly Gypsy swung home deftly his shaft, "With all your influence today, how many of you are so living that your children will remember you for your faithfulness to this same Book?" It was a tense moment. I felt the impact more than Gypsy did, for I knew a few there whose children are today's problem. No hand was raised.

#### 4.) Aim For **Eternal Significance**

– Parents are you just training your children for the present world, OR are you training them for eternity? To leave a mark in their small slice of the world for a blinking moment of time, or to leave a profound and unalterable mark on and for Eternity?!

**Mathew 25:31-34** *"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*

**Ephesians 5:15-16** *Pay careful attention, then, to how you walk--not as unwise people but as wise-- making the most of the time, because the days are evil.*

– The late Bishop Edwin Hughes once delivered a rousing sermon on "God's Ownership" that offended a rich parishioner. The wealthy man took the bishop off for lunch, and then walked him through his elaborate gardens, woodlands, and farm. "Now are you going to tell me," he demanded when the tour was completed, that all this land does not belong to me?" Bishop Hughes smiled and suggested, "Ask me that same question a hundred years from now."

**1 John 2:15-17** *Do not love the world or the things that belong to the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. Because everything that belongs to the world-- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride in one's lifestyle--is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world with its lust is passing away, but the one who does God's will remains forever.*

**Philippians 3:7-10** *But everything that was a gain to me, I have considered to be a loss because of Christ. More than that, I also consider everything to be a loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. Because of Him I have suffered the loss of all things and consider them filth, so that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own from the law, but one that is through faith in Christ--the righteousness from God based on faith. My goal is to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,*

## CONCLUDING ENCOURAGEMENT: WE ARE NOT **ALONE**

**Matthew 11:28-30** *"Come to Me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. All of you, take up My yoke and learn from Me, because I am gentle and*

***humble in heart, and you will find rest for yourselves. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."***

**Galatians 6:9** *So we must not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don't give up.*

**1 John 4:4** *You are from God, little children, and you have conquered them, because the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.*

**Illustration:** One or two of us here this morning just might decide to watch a football game tonight. Tony Evans compares the 'lines' of parenting to those on the football field. "The world is constantly looking to blur our sidelines these days – to expand our standards of what is acceptable behavior and confuse our children about how the game of life is played – and our job is to keep those sidelines clear and in force. Our authority must be exercised in several different arenas. The first is the training of our children." (ibid., pg. 127)