

# Christian Parenting

## Week 1: God's Global Plan for the Family

### I. The Delights and Challenges of Parenting

#### A. Delights

*Proverbs 29:17 Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul.*

*Genesis 5:28-29 When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son. <sup>29</sup> He named him Noah and said, "He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the LORD has cursed."*

*Psalms 128:1-6 Blessed are all who fear the LORD, who walk in his ways. <sup>2</sup> You will eat the fruit of your labor; blessings and prosperity will be yours. <sup>3</sup> Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your sons will be like olive shoots around your table. <sup>4</sup> Thus is the man blessed who fears the LORD. <sup>5</sup> May the LORD bless you from Zion all the days of your life; may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem, <sup>6</sup> and may you live to see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel.*

#### B. Challenges... Specifically for 21<sup>st</sup> Century America

##### 1. Attack on Marriage

Feminism's attack on Biblical manhood and womanhood

Media's attack on the marriage bed through constant temptations to lust

Homosexuality's attack on marriage by seeking legal redefinitions of "marriage" or a "family"

Materialism's attack by forcing women to work to achieve comfortable lifestyle

Result: alarming increase in divorce statistics, even among supposedly "evangelical" churches

##### B. Attack on Parenting

Pop psychology's attack by fostering the "child-centered home" and a raft of false parenting strategies

Feminism's attack by undermining Biblical order in the home, leaving young children to be raised by day cares workers

Sociology's attack by seeking to make corporal punishment illegal

Youth culture's attack by constantly portraying parents as evil or incompetent meddlers, and youth as coolly self-sufficient

### C. Attack on Family Identity

World constantly teaches to seek your own best

Each man tempted to find his own identity in his profession, each woman encouraged in the same direction; so also the youth

Tremendous forces atomize the family, making it a minor player

### D. The Need for Biblical Courage

Martin Luther: "If I profess with the loudest voice and the clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved. And to be steady on all the battlefield besides is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point."

## II. An Opening Vision from Abraham

***Genesis 18:16-19*** *When the men got up to leave, they looked down toward Sodom, and Abraham walked along with them to see them on their way. <sup>17</sup> Then the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? <sup>18</sup> Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him. <sup>19</sup> For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him."*

## III. Multigenerational Vision... or Not

### A. Psalm 78

***Psalm 78:1-8*** *O my people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth. <sup>2</sup> I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter hidden things, things from of old-- <sup>3</sup> what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us. <sup>4</sup> We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done. <sup>5</sup> He decreed*

*statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, <sup>6</sup> so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. <sup>7</sup> Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands. <sup>8</sup> They would not be like their forefathers-- a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to him.*

B. Deuteronomy 6

*Deuteronomy 6:1-2 These are the commands, decrees and laws the LORD your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, <sup>2</sup> so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the LORD your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life.*

C. But... Hezekiah

*Isaiah 39:5-8 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD Almighty: <sup>6</sup> The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your fathers have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the LORD. <sup>7</sup> And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." <sup>8</sup> "The word of the LORD you have spoken is good," Hezekiah replied. For he thought, "There will be peace and security in my lifetime."*

*2 Kings 20:21 Hezekiah rested with his fathers. And Manasseh his son succeeded him as king.*

*2 Kings 21:1-7 Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-five years. His mother's name was Hephzibah. <sup>2</sup> He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, following the detestable practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before the Israelites. <sup>3</sup> He rebuilt the high places his father Hezekiah had destroyed; he also erected altars to Baal and made an Asherah pole, as Ahab king of Israel had done. He bowed down to all the starry hosts and worshiped them. <sup>4</sup> He built altars in the temple of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem I will put my Name." <sup>5</sup> In both courts of the temple of the LORD, he built altars to all the starry hosts. <sup>6</sup> He sacrificed his own son in the fire, practiced sorcery and divination, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of the LORD, provoking him to anger. <sup>7</sup> He took the carved Asherah pole he had made and put it in the temple, of which the LORD had said to David and to his son Solomon, "In this temple and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put my Name forever.*

**2 Kings 24:1-4** *During Jehoiakim's reign, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon invaded the land, and Jehoiakim became his vassal for three years. But then he changed his mind and rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>2</sup> The LORD sent Babylonian, Aramean, Moabite and Ammonite raiders against him. He sent them to destroy Judah, in accordance with the word of the LORD proclaimed by his servants the prophets. <sup>3</sup> Surely these things happened to Judah according to the LORD's command, in order to remove them from his presence because of the sins of Manasseh and all he had done, <sup>4</sup> including the shedding of innocent blood. For he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the LORD was not willing to forgive.*

#### IV. God's Original Plan... Still in Force

##### A. Be Fruitful and Multiply... Still!

**Genesis 1:26-28** *Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." <sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. <sup>28</sup> God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."*

**Genesis 9:1** *Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth."*

##### B. The Promise Advanced Along Family Lines

1. original promise made concerning the seed of woman
2. covenants to Abraham and David were fulfilled through families

##### C. The Gospel Advances Along Family Lines

**Ephesians 3:14-15** *"For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name."*

**Revelation 7:9-10** *After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. <sup>10</sup> And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."*

**1 Corinthians 7:14** *For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.*

*Acts 16:15* When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.

*Acts 16:29-34* The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. <sup>30</sup> He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" <sup>31</sup> They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved--you and your household." <sup>32</sup> Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. <sup>33</sup> At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. <sup>34</sup> The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God--he and his whole family.

D. Spiritual Analogies: from Physical Family to Spiritual Family

*John 1:12-13* Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-- <sup>13</sup> children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

*Romans 8:15-16* For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." <sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

*Ephesians 2:19* Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household

*Galatians 6:10* Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

## V. The Foundation: A Healthy Marriage

### A. Malachi 2

*Malachi 2:13-16* Another thing you do: You flood the LORD's altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands. <sup>14</sup> You ask, "Why?" It is because the LORD is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant. <sup>15</sup> Has not the LORD made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth. <sup>16</sup> "I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the LORD Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith.

B. Simple Proposition: The Healthier Your Marriage, the Healthier Your Parenting

1. Ephesians 5:21-33 (godly marriage precepts)... FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY BY...

2. Ephesians 6:1-4 (godly parenting precepts)

C. Where there is Brokenness, God's Grace Can Still Triumph

*Romans 5:20 But where sin increased, grace increased all the more*

*Psalm 68:5-6 A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling. <sup>6</sup> God sets the lonely in families*

## VI. Straightforward Commands to the Church

A. Ephesians 6:1-4

*Ephesians 6:1-4 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. <sup>2</sup> "Honor your father and mother"-- which is the first commandment with a promise-- <sup>3</sup> "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." <sup>4</sup> Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.*

B. Matthew 15

*Matthew 15:4 For God said, 'Honor your father and mother' and 'Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.'*

## VII. Conclusion

A. Godly Parenting is Essential to the Healthy Life of the Church

B. The Bible is Sufficient as a Teaching Manual for Godly Parenting

C. The Atoning Work of Christ, the Indwelling Spirit, and a Godly Marriage are also Essential