



WELCOME

Shepherding Families **Listening to your children**

Week 3

November 2nd, 2008



Q
U
I
C
K
L
Y
r
e
v
i
e
w
:

C
l
a
s
s
F
o
r
m
a
t
:
D
i
s
c
u
s
s
i
o
n
•

S
t
o
r
i
e
s
w
e
l
c
o
m
e
d
•
A
p
p
l
i



To Note...

Class Format

- Discussion • Stories • Application • Prayer

Ground Rules

- Safety • No fixing (unless asked)
- Speak to build up

Resources

- Website: www.TrinityFellowship.org

Next Week: Fall Family Campout...



REVIEW

Purpose of parenting ...

⌘ Glorify God (raise Godly children)

Gen. 1:26-27; Mal. 2:15; Eph. 6:4

Pattern for Parenting...Shepherd

⌘ Provider, Protector and Guide

Ps. 23; John 10:1-18

What do children need most from the shepherd?

Matthew 18:1-6

1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

2 And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them

3 and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

TEXT/Context: Comparative status of Disciples in God’s Kingdom (would have been and is a normal question).

Peter already shining brightly among his peers (confession, special mission - transfiguration, proven problem solver - Paid temple tax through fish shekel)

Child - an object lesson, but in what way?

Not about the “apparent” or “assumed” ethical/moral characteristics of Children (I.e. innocence, humility, receptiveness, trustfulness, the like)

About status socially and corresponding needs

expressed) DEPENDENT & RECEPTIVE (to the gift of God’s kingdom as a gift - I.e. His love

society) The disciples needed to be concerned for the weakest and most humble members of

Jesus identified with the lowliest and “welcomed them”

Children: the lowest in the authority scale and decision-making ability

Loved immensely in Jewish society (I.e. Dt. 6); but completely dependent upon adults

kingdom)? What does this say about the authority of a child (as entry/participation in the

not enter it” Mark 10:15 parallel: “whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall

What do children need most from the shepherd?

Matthew 18:1-6

4 Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me,

6 but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

Childlikeness:

Humble - need to accept their already low status; Dependent
v. 5 Children (loved) and received: “welcomed in Jesus’ name”; Loved by God through Christ

Jesus identified and welcomed the lowliest of society

Children welcomed not b/c of being children, but in light of a representative of Christ and His love for them

Welcome children with all the unconditional love of Christ

Thus (vv. 6-9) - care for these little ones appropriately

If we blow it in “welcoming” and “guiding” children, the consequences are devastating - a capital offense

“Cause to stumble” - cause to loose their faith; to question God’s love and protection

CHILDREN NEED: • Love (as Christ loves) • Protected (b/c they are lowly and dependent upon other authority)

What do children need most from the shepherd?

Eph. 6:1-4

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), 3 “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.”
4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

To reinforce the child's needs for love and structure, Eph. 6:1-4 addresses the relationship between parents and children in the list of family duties (following marriage)

Children's responsibilities: Obey! Understand their position as dependent upon God-established authority

Father's (& mother's) duty: Don't provoke (anger, and thus discouragement cf. Col. 3:20-21). I.e. Love them so that they will grow in love and faith and obedience to Christ.

What do children need most from the shepherd?

- ⌘ Every child is asking two questions:
 1. "Am I Loved?"
 2. "Can I Get What I Want?"
- ⌘ To answer them, we must *listen*
- ⌘ **When** we fail to listen,
we do our children harm

Listen:

- To God's Word for us
- Listen to the kids: far too easy to react to the wrong question in the wrong way

Illus: Boys fight...sometimes it is just about the fight (energy escalating), but often times about something else.

Friday's battle of front yard swing: Boys trumping their authority to each other

Saturday's battle for the swing: Luke hurt (unloved) by his siblings
Hearing the right question is necessary for the right response.

Other possible illustrations: Doing homework (is it authority? "I won't do it" or/ love - "will you love me even if I fail?")

Doing chores: whining..."I need help" or "I want you to do it for me"
How easy it is to just do a job for them and let them get their own way
Or/ not take the time to hug or encourage (too tired or busy to pause)

THE ONE GUARANTEE IN PARENTING: We all fail to answer these two core questions accurately and simultaneously.

When we miss it, we become targets of our kid's accusations (I.e. you don't understand, you don't care...)

We need to listen for the right questions to answer and provide for our children's deepest needs.

Do these kinds of words catch us and stop us to listen better? Or dismiss the kids are being misguided?

What do children need? (contd.)

Can I get my own way?

		Yes	No
Am I Loved?	Yes	I Indulgent / Distant	IV Strength / Delight
	No	II Dangerous / Demeaning	III Rule Bound / Dull

Taken from "How Children Raise Parents" by Dan Allender p24.

The way we listen and respond to the 2 core questions leads to our child's benefit or detriment. There are four options for answering the core questions.

Most parents answer in one of the 3 combinations that bring detriment to the child and the parent/child relationship. Only one combination brings benefit.

(Ask for examples/illustrations of each)

I - Indulgent & Distant: Children lack strength and grow up knowing a counterfeit tenderness

Generally parents are well-to-do, highly educated, caring more about public image than hearts of kids (soccer moms and dads)

Love dispensed through gifts (latest toys, surrogate nanny even), often times overprotective or overly possessive

Children are often poised and competent but lack strength of conviction and character that develops by bumping up against consistent boundaries

Parents are often accused of being manipulative, being unwilling to embrace suffering and finding joy outside the home (I.e. image)

Children often act out, get into trouble, pushing limits (searching for boundaries and anyone willing to care enough to provide them)

They want/need the strength of discipline and long for the experience and delight of real love (not just experiences)

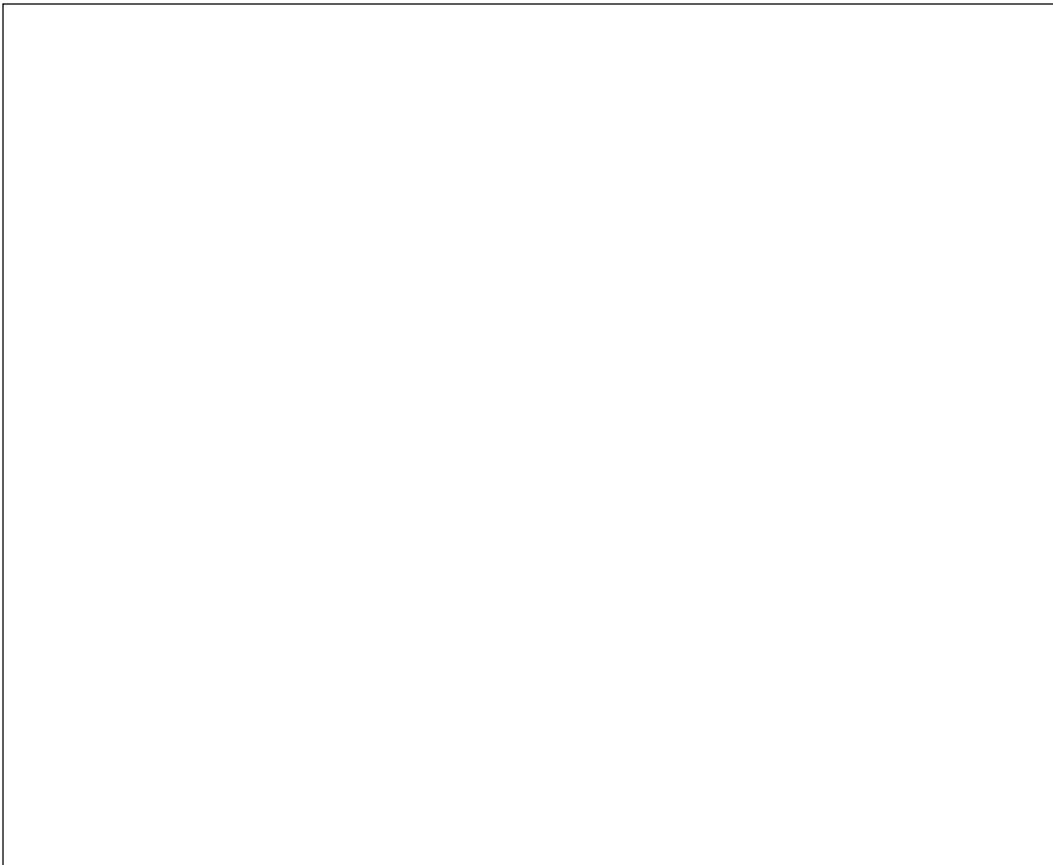
("Into the Wild" - Chris McCandless, aka "Alexander Supertramp")

II - Dangerous & Demeaning: Children learn that their parents don't care what they do AND they don't enjoy them.

Parents unwilling to suffer hardship of enforcing boundaries AND embrace the joy of really caring

"a soulless and inhuman home" (Allender p. 24)

Share Family Purpose Statements



Prayer Requests

Homework

- ⊕ Flesh out your family purpose statement with goals for each person
 - ⊕ They should "fit" with your purpose
 - ⊕ They should be Scriptural
- ⊕ REVIEW: in 2 weeks. Come prepared to share your results!



Next Week

Family Camp!