

PARENTING BY THE BOOK
GROWING OUR CHILDREN IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

1. **INTRODUCTION**: “WHEN YOU CHANGE THE WAY YOU LOOK AT THINGS, THE THINGS YOU LOOK AT CHANGE”.

2. **GRACE**

A. **PRINCIPLE**: God never calls us to a task without giving us what you need to do it. He never sends us without going with us.

1. **GOD DOESN'T ALWAYS CALL THE EQUIPPED... BUT HE ALWAYS EQUIPS THE CALLED... IF WE ASK HIM AND ALLOW HIM TO DO SO.**

2. Many, many fathers and mothers carry a **PARTICULAR PROBLEM** into their **PARENTING**, and **THEY DO NOT KNOW IT.**

a. It **AFFECTS** the way we **THINK ABOUT** the **TASK OF PARENTING** that has been **ASSIGNED TO THEM.**

b. It **AFFECTS** the way we **VIEW OUR CHILDREN.**

c. It **SHAPES** our **RESPONSES** in all the hard moments that parents face.

d. It **DETERMINES WHAT WE WILL SAY** to ourselves as we begin their day or as we crumble into bed, exhausted once again.

e. It **LEAVES MANY PARENTS** feeling **UNPREPARED, UNABLE, AND DISCOURAGED.**

f. It **CAUSES MANY PARENTS** to wish that they could just **QUIT**, when they know in fact **THEY CANNOT.**

g. It **MAKES PARENTS GIVE IN TO THE TEMPTATION TO SAY AND DO THINGS** that they know in their heart of hearts they **SHOULDN'T SAY** and **SHOULDN'T DO.**

3. **WHAT IS THIS SILENT, BUT DEADLY, PROBLEM THAT AFFECTS SO MANY PARENTS?.....** Far **TOO MANY CHRISTIAN PARENTS** have a **HUGE GAP** in their **UNDERSTANDING** and **RELIANCE ON GOD'S GRACE.**

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- a. There is **NOTHING MORE IMPORTANT** to **CONSISTENT, FAITHFUL, PATIENT, LOVING, AND EFFECTIVE PARENTING** THAN TO **UNDEstand** WHAT GOD HAS GIVEN US IN **GRACE** THROUGH HIS SON, the LORD JESUS CHIST.
 - 1) I HEAR YOU... “RUSTY, I don’t need more **THEOLOGY**; I need **PRACTICAL HELP!!**”
 - b. PLEASE BEAR WITH ME because this may be **ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT SECTIONS IN THIS CLASS. WE WILL GET TO PRACTICAL HELP AND SPEND A LOT OF TIME ON IT.**
 - 1) **FOR TODAY UNDERSTANDING GOD’S GRACE WILL CHANGE YOU, AND AS IT CHANGES YOU, IT WILL CHANGE THE WAY YOU PARENT YOUR CHILDREN.**
 - 2) **“WHEN YOU CHANGE THE WAY YOU LOOK AT THINGS, THE THINGS YOU LOOK AT CHANGE”.**
- B. It is **SAD**, and a source of so much **PARENTING DISCOURAGEMENT**, that so many parents do their work in the middle of a **HOLE in OUR GRASP OF GOD’S GRACE.**
- 1. **MOST CHRISTIAN PARENTS** have a fairly good understanding of **PAST GRACE (JUSTIFICATION)**, that is, the **FORGIVENESS** we have received because of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.
 - 2. We have a decent grasp of **FUTURE GRACE (GLORIFICATION)**, the place in eternity that is guaranteed us as a child of God.
 - 3. **But the PROBLEM** is that we have **LITTLE UNDERSTANDING of PRESENT GRACE (SANCTIFICATION)**, WHERE PARENTING IS CONCERNED.
 - a. The right here, right now **BENEFITS OF THE WORK OF JESUS FOR ALL OF US LIVING BETWEEN THE “ALREADY” (past grace) and the “NOT YET” (future grace).**

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4. Vast numbers of parents think that the phrase “**the GOSPEL of GOD’S GRACE**” has **NOTHING TO DO WITH THE TRIALS OF PARENTING.**
 - a. We hear **SERMONS ABOUT GOD’S GRACE** and we **SING SONGS ABOUT GOD’S GRACE, BUT** they **DO NOT** seem to address our **STRUGGLES AS PARENTS.**
 - b. So it **NEEDS to be SAID** and then **EXPLAINED** that as a child of God, you have been given not only glorious **PAST GRACE** and **FUTURE GRACE, BUT** amazing **PRESENT GRACE** as well.
 5. **PRESENT GRACE (SANCTIFICATION)** reaches you **WHEREVER GOD HAS PLACED YOU.**
 - a. **THIS GRACE** reaches you in your **darkest parenting moments.**
 - b. **THIS GRACE** addresses **your feeling of inability.**
 - c. **THIS GRACE** touches you **when you feel you are at the end of your wisdom.**
 - d. **THIS GRACE** is yours for the taking **when you’re walking down the hallway and you know that you’ve just blown it.**
 - e. **THIS GRACE** reaches you **when your child seems rebellious and hard-hearted and you don’t know what to do.**
 - f. **THIS GRACE** touches you in moments of **deep parental regret.**
 6. If you were to ask, “**WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING GOD HAS GIVEN US AS A PARENT, I WOULD NOT SAY THE WISDOM PRINCIPLES OF HIS WORD”.**
 - a. **NO... I WOULD SAY “HIS GRACE”**
 - b. Let me explain **WHY**...
- C. Like everything else **GOD CALLS PEOPLE TO DO... GOD DOES NOT CALL PEOPLE TO BE PARENTS BECAUSE WE ARE ABLE.**
1. **PEOPLE IN THE BIBLE WHO WERE NOT ABLE....**

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- a. **Abraham** wasn't able.
 - b. **Moses** wasn't able.
 - c. **Gideon** wasn't able.
 - d. **David** wasn't able.
 - e. **The disciples** weren't able,
 - f. **AND NEITHER ARE WE!**
 - g. **ABLE PEOPLE JUST DO NOT EXIST... AND THEY CERTAINLY DO NOT EXIST AS PARENTS!**
2. God did **NOT** create human beings to be **INDEPENDENTLY ABLE...** He **DESIGNED US TO BE DEPENDANT... ON HIM!**
- a. So **QUIT BEAING YOURSELF UP** because you feel **INADEQUATE** as a **PARENT...** you feel that way **BECAUSE IT IS TRUE!**
3. **WHY** would a **God of PERFECT WISDOM** ask **INADEQUATE PEOPLE** to do such an **IMPORTANT JOB AS PARENTING?**
- a. The **ANSWER** is **VERY IMPORTANT** for us to grasp....
 - b. **GOD CALLS UNABLE PEOPLE** to do **IMPORTANT THINGS** because ultimately what he's working on is **NOT OUR IMMEDIATE SUCCESS, BUT** that we would **COME TO KNOW HIM,** to **LOVE HIM,** to **REST IN HIS GRACE,** and **LIVE FOR HIS GLORY.**
 - c. Let me put it a **different way...** God calls **UNABLE PEOPLE** to **DO IMPORTANT THINGS LIKE PARENTING** so that **HE WILL GET HE GLORY... and NOT US.**
 - d. **GOD** isn't working so that our life as a **PARENT** would be **EASY, PREDICTIBLE, AND FREE FROM STRUGGLE.**
 - e. He calls us to do the **IMPOSSIBLE** so that in our **SEARCH FOR HELP, WE WILL FIND MORE THAN HELP... WE WILL FIND HIM!**

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D. God NEVER CALLS US TO A TASK WITHOUT GIVING US WHAT WE NEED TO DO IT.

- 1. God NEVER SENDS US INTO ANYTHING WITHOUT GOING WITH US.**
- 2. Rather than OUR INABILITY being IN THE WAY OF GOD'S PLAN, it is PART OF HIS PLAN!**
- 3. GOD KNOWS THAT PARENTS WHO ADMIT THAT THEY ARE INADEQUATE, AND TURN TO HIM FOR THEIR SUFFICIENCY, MAKE THE BEST PARENTS.**
 - a. He DOES NOT ASK US TO BE ABLE... HE ASKS US TO BE WILLING.**
 - b. IF WE are WILLING, He WILL MEET US in our WEAKNESS and CHANGE US, and AS HE CHANGES US, HE WILL WORK GOOD THINGS THROUGH US INTO THE HEARTS AND LIVES OF OUR CHILDREN.**

E. NO CHILD REALLY WANTS TO BE PARENTED BY PARENTS WHO THINK THEY ARE "ABLE".

- 1. WHY?... "ABLE" PARENTS TEND TO BE PROUD AND SELF-ASSURED PARENTS.**
- 2. BECAUSE "ABLE" PARENTS ARE PROUD OF THEIR ABILITY, THEY ACT TOO QUICKLY AND WITH TOO MUCH SELF-CONFIDENCE.**
 - a. ... and because they do, THEY LACK PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING.**
 - b. "ABLE" PARENTS tend to ASSUME that THEIR CHILDREN SHOULD BE "ABLE", TOO.**
 - 1) SOOO, THEY TEND TO FAIL TO BE TENDER WHEN THE WEAKNESSES OF THEIR CHILDREN GET EXPOSED.**

"ABLE" PARENTS, who PRIDE THEMSELVES in KEEPING THE LAW, tend to give their children MORE LAW (RELIGION) THAN GRACE (RELATIONSHIP) and are QUICKER TO JUDGE THAN TO UNDERSTAND.

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- c. And “ABLE” PARENTS tend to WANT THEIR CHILDREN TO BE THEIR TROPHIES... A PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION OF THEIR ABILITIES.
 - 1) “ABLE” PARENTS ARE OFTEN REFERRED TO AS “HELICOPTER PARENTS” BECAUSE THEY WANT TO MAKE SURE THEIR CHILDREN ARE MIRRORS OF THEIR “ABILITY”.
- d. IT’S HARD TO LIVE WITH PARENTS WHO DENY WEAKNESS, BECAUSE PEOPLE WHO DENY WEAKNESS TEND NOT TO BE PATIENT, LOVING, AND UNDERSTANDING WITH PEOPLE/CHILDREN THEY SEE AS WEAK.
 - 1) THEY TEND PRODUCE CHILDREN WHO ARE NOT PATIENT, LOVING, AND UNDERSTANDING.
- F. OUR INABILITY is NOT THE DESTRUCTION OF OUR PARENTING, BECAUSE GOD MEETS PARENTS WHO HUMBLY ADMIT THEIR WEKNESSES AND RUN TO HIM FOR HELP.