

Biblical Principles Of Parenting (Part 7)

2 Tim 2:20-22; We're on the downhill side of our series on parenting; In fact, we only have one more to go after this; The point of which, is to build your house on the rock The rock solid truths of God's Word; Biblical principles And having covered 9 of them, numbers 10 and 11 are no less important

- Especially so, given the hyper-sexualized world in which we live; Something I'm pretty sure I don't need to convince you of; I'm pretty sure you're well aware . . . Of the influence and impact and onslaught of *sex* these days From pornography, to parties, to apps for hooking up, brothels, movies, billboards, strip clubs, trafficking – it's rampant; And all around us; Especially our kids

Which means, it's more important than ever, as parents, to guard their purity; That's . . .

Principle #10 – Guard their purity (2 Tim 2:22)

Which you know as well as I, is a *battle*; An ongoing, constant battle

On one side, arrayed *against* you as a parent – is the desire of your student's eyes, the passions of their flesh (1 Jn 2:16), the pull of the world . . .

The forces of darkness, and hormones; Formidable enemies in and of themselves But when combined with all the others, they're deadly

- On the other side, you have God's Word; That says things like – flee youthful passions Look at 2 Tim 2:20 – *Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable. [21] Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work. [22] So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.*

That's the anchor on the other side of the battle – flee youthful passions (22); And partner with others who are doing the same

In fact, the Song of Solomon (8:4) says – Don't even *stir up or awaken love until it pleases*; Until it's wise; Until it's godly; Until it's in the context of marriage Don't stir it *up* until then, b/c once awakened, it's hard to put down; Hard to deny

- All that to say, there's a battle going on for the purity of your child, your student; And if you don't fight to guard it, they'll lose They'll misappropriate their God-given desires for intimacy and love – and lose it; Right underneath your nose

So I not only want to impress on you the need to *fight*, the need to *guard* their purity, but I want to give you 3 very practical ways to do so; Starting with this . . .

• Know their friends

If you're going to guard your son/daughter's purity, u need to know who they're hanging out with; Who's influencing them; Who might be exposing them to ungodliness You should know their names, you should know whether they're a good influence or a bad one; You should know whether they're a believer or not And you should creep on their social media And when I say creep, I mean everything but a background check

- I vividly remember the time, when one of our daughters came home and told us that some guy was going to ask her to homecoming; Basically a date And it was the first time we had ever heard his name

So after asking 20 questions, Becky got on Facebook, and Twitter, and Instagram – and started scrolling through the posts and pictures And after about 2 minutes of vulgarities and vanity, we were like – not going to happen We don't care who he is, or how nice he is – he's obviously not living right So we had her call him and tell him not to even ask, in order to spare him from the humiliation of being refused If you're going to guard your student's purity, you have to know their friends

2nd, you have to . . .

• Access their media

Your son or *daughter's* media; As in their *social media*

“What? I can't do that; That's a violation of their privacy”

No, that's accountability; That's oversight; That's parenting; That's life

We need to teach our kids to live *openly* before the face of God; B/c the veil of privacy is often a shroud for sin Especially in the teenage and early adult years; When exploration of aberrant behaviors is like a siren song; And the risk of *abusing* their privacy is massive

- That means, you need to know what they're watching, you need to know what they're playing, and you need to have full access to their phone

Your finger print should work just like theirs; And you should know the passcode just like they do; And use it from time to time

If you're going to guard their purity, check their phone; Unannounced

Who are they texting? What's the content of their conversations? What time was it?

What pictures have they saved? Are they sexting? You don't know; You have no idea

- You need full access to their phone, and full access to their *social media accounts*; Including their passwords; You should not only be their *friend* on Facebook . . . You should be able to *access* it just like them And the same is true of Instagram, Twitter, and any other social media app

Like SnapChat for instance; Who's on their list?

Not, “*What's* on their Snap Chat, but *who?*” B/c after 24 hours you can't see it; And with 8 *billion* Snapchat videos sent every *day* . . .

You can rest assured they're not all good

- Access their phone, access their social media, and access their *computer* Look at their browsing history from time to time; Make sure they're not erasing things Put some safeguards in place; Get Covenant Eyes – accountability software

And by all means don't let them have a computer in their *room*

Early on we didn't even let our girls have *phones* in their room; And that was before they were smart; If you're going to guard their purity . . .

You need to access, and oversee *their* access, to all media

And then 3rd . . .

- **Limit their dating**

1 Thess 4:3-7

[3] *For this is the will of God, your sanctification* [your increasing Christlikeness, your holiness; and then he breaks it down into 3 parts]: [A] *that you abstain from sexual immorality* [abstain from having sex outside of marriage; and when you put that together with *abstain from every form of evil* in 1 Thess 5, it means stay away from the heavy petting that *leads* to sex]; [4] [B] *that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor*, [5] *not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God* [we shouldn't be acting like unbelievers in this respect]; [6] [and C] *that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you* [IOW sin brings discipline and consequences]. [7] *For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness.*

And one of the best ways to help your student with that, is to limit their dating

Just b/c *you* messed up and turned out okay, doesn't mean your son or daughter will
And even if they do, why would you ever want to encumber them with the same baggage? The same remorse? The same gut-wrenching repentance?

Your teenager needs your help; Their hormones are raging, their thoughts are racing, and their maturity is lacking

And one of the best ways to keep a lid on things, one of the best ways to guard their purity, is to limit their dating

➤ Which for our family, meant 5 things; And we started talking about these from the time our girls entered grade school

A. They couldn't date until they were 16; Even in a group; They couldn't pair up; The ability to handle the swirl of emotions and desire, is just not there

B. He had to be a believer; We told our girls early on, that every boy who likes them, eventually wants to have sex with them

The only difference, is that believers are trying *not* to, while unbelievers are trying *to*

C. He had to be involved in a solid church; Not just lip-service, but life service

D. He had to be marriage material; Why else would you date? And why else would risk such emotional brokenness and baggage if they break up?

E. He had to ask me first; Which involved me asking him his testimony, discerning his heart, and conveying mine; Like, "I want you to bless my daughter"

"I want you to treat her like the child of God she is"

5 restrictions to limit their dating

You know what our girls said? "That eliminates almost everybody in high school"

And we said, "Exactly"

➤ And one of the coolest things about all this, is that while we intended these guidelines only for high school, our girls used them in college

Even requiring interested guys to call and ask at *that* point

B/c they recognized the built-in safeguards, and *their* built-in weaknesses (**Summary**)

Do whatever it takes to guard their purity, and hopefully, they will too

That's principle #10, and 3 ways to accomplish it; B/c the battle rages

Principle #11 – Get them to church (Josh 24:15)

Get your kids to church; If the doors are open, walk through them; If ministry is happening, be a part; If discipleship is offered, soak it up

Don't let them neglect that; The Bible is clear – *remember the Sabbath and keep it holy*
Which includes meeting together every single week

Set it apart and make it a non-negotiable in your family

Adopt the mindset of Joshua, and hold to it

Remember him? The Old Testament leader of the Israelites (**Josh 24:15**)?

Who basically said – "Hey, do what you want, but I'm following God; I'm worshipping him;" *As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord*

IOW we're going to center *our* lives around *him*; And his *people*; And his *work*

That was *his* mindset

➤ And we'd do well to make it ours; To be all about *serving* the Lord, and *worshipping* the Lord, and *loving* the Lord – as a *family******

All about getting your kids to church every week, and making sure they're plugged in
Not just spectators, but participants; Including your teenagers

Get them here on the weekends, and get them here *during* the week

Tuesday nights for elementary kids, and Wednesday's for Junior High and High School

No matter what anybody else does, adopt the mindset that *your* house is going to be all about the Lord; All about church

➤ Now, sometimes that raises an objection that goes something like this . . .

"I hear what you're saying, but I don't want to *force* it on them; That might drive them away from the Lord; I think they should make their *own* decision about church"

Really? Do you let them decide whether or not to go to school? B/c if you *make* them they might not like it

Or do you let them sleep at their friend's house whenever they want? B/c if you don't, they might not like *you*

Your responsibility as a parent is to do what's *best* for your kids; And what's best, is getting them to church

Just like getting them to school, getting them home, or getting them fed

➤ Or maybe your issue is *sports*; Maybe you're all about getting your kids to church, but sometimes it conflicts with their music performance, or dance competition . . .

Or debate, or soccer; And when it does, you're not sure what to do

And the first thing I want to say about it, is that the struggle is legit; A pat answer, is not the answer here; B/c extracurricular activities are *good*

They make for well-rounded people; They teach kids the value of teamwork and collaboration; They instill a strong work ethic

They reinforce the importance of perseverance; And the list goes on and on

Extracurricular activities are life written small; And therefore valuable for our kid's development

So the answer to the sports question isn't an easy one

And with 2 daughters who excelled in volleyball, I get it
I understand the tension between wanting the best for their *physical* development, and
wanting the best for their *spiritual* growth
Wanting them to make the *most* of their God-given giftedness, while *cultivating* their
God-given salvation
Wanting them to experience success, but not lose their own soul; I get it

- So to help you navigate those waters, I want to give you 4 guidelines
Call them **Sports Guidelines**, but they apply to *all* extracurricular activities

1. Make sure they're in church at least once a week

It could be Saturday night, Sunday morning, or Wednesday night – just make sure it's *one*
of them; Otherwise you just as well tear Ex 20 and Heb 10 right out of your Bible
Which says don't neglect meeting together as is the habit of some (Heb 10:25)
That's not to say that exceptions are out of the question; Just make sure they're few and
far between

If you have weekend tournaments, draw the line in the sand and tell your team you can't
practice on Wednesday nights; Or that you have to get out early
And if that's a problem, go to a different team
“Oh, we can't do that; They're not as good”
Then you might as well build an *actual* idol to worship, b/c that's what you're doing in
putting your sport before the Lord

2. Don't rationalize

Don't minimize the *importance* of church; Don't let yourself think that it's no big deal;
Even to miss one week; B/c the slope is slippery, and the incline steep
And with something so valuable and so fun as sports – we are particularly susceptible to
falling; Don't rationalize

3. Maintain perspective

Your kid is not going pro; You're not going to get rich off their earnings; Their fame
won't last; Their picture in the paper is not the be all end all
And the chances of them getting a full ride to college is slim to nil
So stop putting all your eggs in that basket, and maintain some perspective

4. Discern their heart

Just like we talked about last week; They could be in church *twice* a week during their
season, and *still* have a rotten attitude
In which case you might have to pull the plug; B/c if their *heart's* not right, everything's
wrong; You have to discern their heart (**Summary of Guidelines**)

And yours as well; As a parent; B/c it's just as easy for *u* to get off-track, as it is for them
Like when our girls had an occasional practice on Wednesday night in Iowa City, and
Becky and I were like – “You're going, right?”
And they were like – “No; We're not missing youth group”
And we were like – “Oh; Never mind us; We're just gonna go repent” (**Summary**)

- Discern their heart, maintain perspective, don't rationalize, and get them to church

B/c if you let the good things crowd out the best things, you'll sacrifice your kids at the
altar of success, and undermine their ultimate good

Pray – Lord, help us; Help us protect our children's purity, give us the courage to do
what's best, and keep us from the sin of idolatry
We give now of our tithes, as an act of worship, to you