What It Takes To Have A Strong Family

I. What is a Christian Family?

A. Not just outward appearances

B. But an inward reality

Larry Christenson: "A Christian family is a family that lives together with Jesus Christ."

What is the secret to a spiritually strong family?

Cultivate my family's relationship with Jesus Christ.

- We need to respond to His Presence in our family
- We need to respond to His Plan for our family

II. We need to respond to Christ's Presence in our families.

A. Built by God Psa 127:1

"Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it;

Jesus said, "without Me you can do nothing."

John15:5

B. Blessed by God: Psa 127:3-5a

Vs 3 "Behold, children are a gift of the LORD; The fruit of the womb is a reward."

Vs 5 How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them!



B. Blessed by God: Psa 127:3-5a

Vs 4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth.





Proverbs 22:6 “Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it.”

We want to prepare our children for their God-given destiny.

III. We need to respond to Christ's plan for our families:

A. God's blueprint for the family

1. Christ is the head of the body... so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything. Col. 1:18
2. The husband's loving, sacrificial leadership Eph. 5:22-33
3. The wife's submission & respect as a complement & helpmeet. Eph. 5:22-33

A. God's blueprint for the family

4. Parents should raise their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Eph. 6:4

- Children need to hear and see the Word of God lived out in their family. Deut 6:6-7
- We want to raise morally responsible children.
  - We (fathers) should not provoke our children to anger 6:4a

    Col. 3:21 "Fathers, do not exasperate your children, that they may not lose heart."

A. God's blueprint for the family:

5. Children should obey their parents in the Lord.
   Eph. 6:1-3
   Why?
   a. vs 1 "for this is right"
   b. vs 2 God commanded it: "Honor your father and mother"
   c. it comes with promised blessings vs 3:
   "that it may be well with you" (Deut. 5:16)
   "that you may live long on the earth"
   (Exo. 20:12)

B. Pitfalls that threaten successful parenting.

1. Not understanding the nature of the husband -wife relationship in the parenting process.
   a. The husband-wife relationship is the first social relationship. Gen. 2:18, 22-24
   b. It must be seen as the priority relationship in the family.

Source: Growing Kids God's Way

B. Pitfalls that threaten successful parenting.

2. The dangers of child-centered parenting.

a. It undermines the husband-wife relationship.

b. It contributes to a child's self-centeredness.

c. It fosters family independence not family inter-dependence.

Source: Growing Kids God's Way

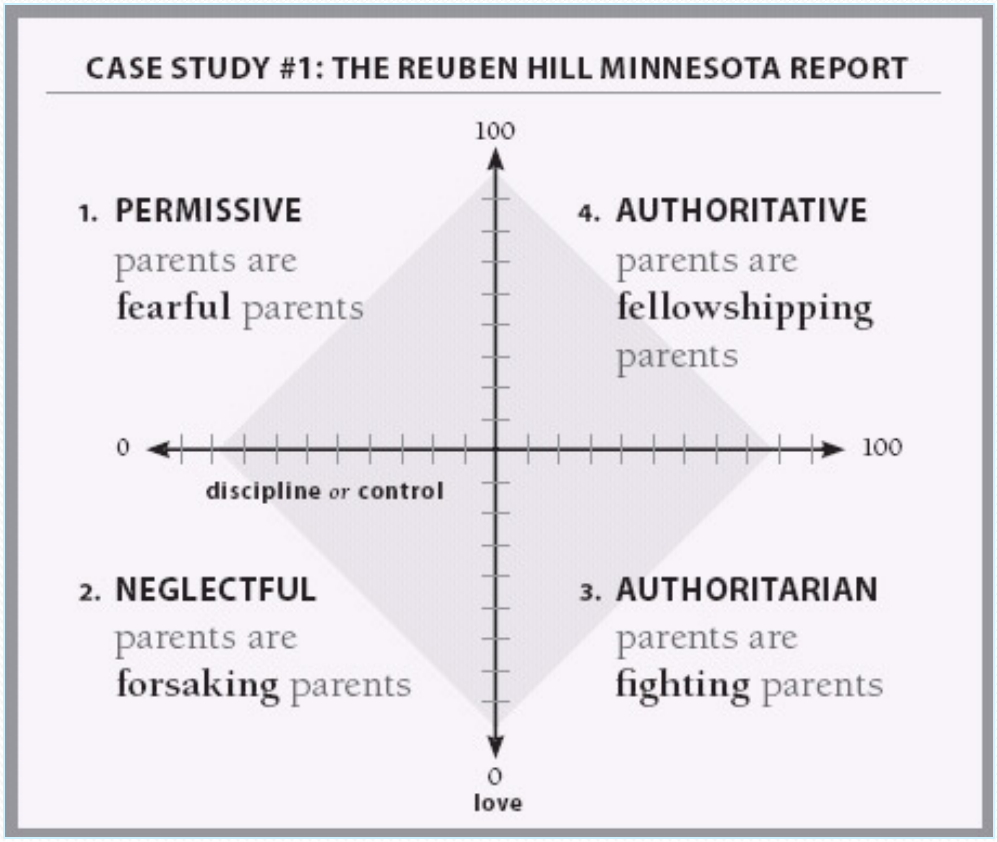
B. Pitfalls that threaten successful parenting.

3. Failure to practice Biblical discipline.

Prov. 13:24: "He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him diligently."

Four Parenting Styles

Children w/ feelings of inferiority



Children w/ healthy self-esteem & good coping skills

Children feel forsaken & estranged

Children rebel & can't wait to leave home

From *Effective Parenting in a Defective World* by Chip Ingram.

Some good books:

- *What the Bible Says about Parenting.* John MacArthur
- *Shepherding a Child's Heart,* Tedd Tripp
- *Dare to Discipline,* James Dobson
- *The Christian Family,* Larry Christenson