

Parent Ministry

How You Always Meant to Parent

Setting Aside the Distractions of Today to Focus on Your Legacy of Tomorrow

Authors: Brian Housman

REVIEW: A refreshing and inspired book about Christ-center parenting in a world of child-centered and parent-centered families. Brian Housman, author of numerous parenting books, unashamedly speaks to the heart of the matter-God's process, design, and plan for wholeness and holiness in parenting children.

SNAPSHOT

Recognizing God's Process

Parents are part of God's process in their child's life. Parents should seek to embrace and recognize that children are in that process. Often parents struggle with the "3 F's" of fear, failure, and frustration. Parents keeping a cool head and the end in mind will be able change how they parent.

Parents need to step back from looking just at behavior to the seeking the source of behavior, a child's belief system. Parents must recognize that what a child believes, will affect how they behave. A child, therefore, needs to see Christlikeness and parent's belief system lived out in front of them in order to adjust their own behaviors and beliefs.

Seeing God's Design for Life

God's design for children is the same design He has for all of us. Like God, parents should not simply impart rules, but understand the overall purpose and design.

- God's design gives responsibility.
- God's design provided direction.
- God's design also offered freedom.

Parents must learn to step back from the day-to-day struggle to see the whole picture of God's design and purpose in their child and all mankind.

Walking Together in God's Design

The ongoing conversation of God's plan requires parents to move from enforcing "dos" and "don'ts" to walking together with their children in the everyday life with God. In walking together in God's plan parents can change their children's feelings and behavior, by changing their child's heart.

Teaching Balance One Step at a Time

Like taking first steps or riding a bike, Godly parenting comes down to teaching



balance one step at a time: 2 hands, 1 hand, none.

The most important first step in a spiritual journey is to know and teach the truth. God's word teaches a child how to answer the two essential questions:

- What does God say about me?
- What do I need to live an abundant relationship with Christ?

Acting as shepherds in a child's life parents walk behind, guide beside, and teach ahead from God's word who to balance life and truth.

Spiritual Balance One Day at a Time

Day in and day out parenting is a faithful spiritual journey of teachable moments and invitations to join in the rhythms of life. Parents are the only person in a child's life that will play dual relational roles, of parent and brothers/sisters in Christ.

Living day in and day out together in the good and the bad children will intuitively learn positive spiritual disciplines. Children will learn God's design for them through how parents live out their own design and purpose in front of them.

Teaching Them to Fall (and Get Back Up Again)

Children will fall and fail, that is a part of life and learning. Parent should be able to teach their children it is okay to fall, and also how to get back up again.

Children face three different kinds of falls and hurts that parents will have the opportunity to teach them through.

1. An unprovoked circumstance.
2. An unmet opportunity.
3. A moral compromise.

Each time a child falls it is an opportunity to teach, encourage, and correct. These are also opportunity to walk beside a child and bear the burden with them. Understand it is not to bear the burden for them, but rather bear the burden with them through five steps to help them get back up again:

1. Explain God's pruning process
2. Invite them into your own valleys and mountaintops
3. Be willing to share your own mistakes when appropriate
4. Model biblical restoration by being willing to ask for forgiveness yourself
5. Discipline within the context of a relationship

Launching into Wholeness and Holiness

God's design is for wholeness and holiness. God's plan extends beyond our family. Parents need to find a "web of influence", other adults that can assist in the process of Godly discipleship. Pastor, teachers, small group leader and coaches can create an additional circle of Godliness developing a child's passions and abilities as part of God's plan. Additionally, fostering a dependency on Christ and His church will bring a broader picture of putting

God at the center of everything. God is the one
that gives all relationships
meaning

inside and outside of the home. Wholeness in Him is to understand that “...*God doesn't fit in a box; He is the box that holds everything together.*”

Parenting for a Lifetime

The Hebrew way of parenting was not an 18-year sprint but a life-long marathon. A 5-year-old child was taught the written Old Testament through reading and memorizing. The 10-year-old child was taught the oral interpretations of the laws of God. At 15 years old a child begins to learn the collection of civic and ceremonial laws. Young adults at the age of 20 were commissioned into the career they would pursue. Not until a Hebrew person was 30 would they be considered fully taught and be given the authority to teach others. Parenting for a lifetime understands a parent's authoritative, influential and mentoring relationships over the long haul.

“Parenting how you always meant to parent” is parenting based on God's design for our children, not our own design. It is a long-term process with the end in mind not the present fears, failures, or frustrations. Parenting in this way passes on a legacy of Christ-likeness.

