

“TIME is of the Essence!”

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8; Ephesians 5:15-16

Intro. – There is a myth still being circulated and accepted by parents today: “I may not spend quantity time with my kids, but I give them quality time.” The fact is, both are necessary. The equation of true love won’t balance any other way. Our kids understand their importance to us in direct proportion as to the amount of time we spend with them. It has been correctly said, “Kids spell love T-I-M-E!”

King David is a great example of a man who didn’t place his kids amongst his priorities. You see in terms of wanting to please the Lord, David was *a man after God’s own heart* (1 Samuel 13:14). Israel’s second king was a military genius, a successful monarch, and accomplished musician, and a prolific poet, but when it came to his kids, he was a miserable failure. The experience of three of David’s children, Absalom, Tamar, and Amnon, as found in 2 Samuel 13, records for us the proof. What happened with these three? Why did they turn out the way they did? What was missing that resulted in their tragic lives? A simple reading of Scripture will reveal that David may have been willing to give his life for his kids, but was not willing to give them his time.

I suspect David’s kids felt like the little guy I read about whose dad operated home like a drill sergeant. Every morning after breakfast he would line the kids up for inspection to make sure their teeth were brushed, noses were blown, and hair was combed. After inspection would come the orders for the day. The youngest son had finally had enough. When the sergeant dad came to the little guy in the inspection, the little son eyeballed his dad and said, “Sir, is there any way I can transfer out of this chicken outfit?”

David’s kids probably asked the same question. Despite all his vast resources/abilities, David had little time for his kids. It’s true some parents go to other extremes. Like the mom who lives vicariously through her cheerleader daughter, or the dad who delights in his son sowing wild oats. Kids need dad and mom to be adults not their buddies; however, being adults doesn’t mean giving as little time as possible to their kids.

Purpose: to better understand the necessity for TIME in loving your kids

As our two texts make clear, there is a time for everything and when it comes to raising kids, time is of the utter most essence. Want to use an acrostic to develop what Scripture says concerning TIME being of the essence when it comes to raising our kids

I “T” – Take the Time:

A. To TALK

1. The lack of communication gives Satan a foothold and this seems the greatest problem with men:
 - a. Illus. – E. Ray Jerkins prof. & marriage/family counselor has clients lists what spouse does to upset each other. ½ of 1% put: “My wife won’t talk to me.” Yet better than 90% women put, “My husband won’t talk to me.”
 - b. Illus. – E. Ray Jerkins had client who was a dad didn’t communicate. Family concluded:
 - not interested in sharing himself with them... they weren’t important to him... he didn’t care or like them... he thought they were stupid; thus, he couldn’t talk too intelligent...
2. The lack of communication is not speaking truthfully
 - a. falsehood and lies breeds in an environment of poor communications
 - b. it takes time to communicate truth, especially to kids – need to show interest by talking...

B. For TASKS

- 2 Thessalonians 3:10-11 *“For even when we were with you we used to give you this order: if anyone will not work, neither let him eat. For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies.”*
- 1. Pleasant tasks – fun/recreational activities are needed... all work and no play make for dull kids...
- 2. Unpleasant tasks – kids need to learn discipline and not being lazy busybodies... give kids a sense of responsibility – make beds... mow lawn... wash dishes... clean up messes... no work no eat!

C. For TRAINING

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

1. Be an example – what priorities are you writing on your kids’ hearts? Early ballgames etc. late to worship... check school work seldom check what learn in Bible School...forbid late nights during school week, but late on Saturday...i.e. is school (a good thing) taking precedence over the Lord and His Church (best thing)?
2. Illus. – remember TV spots years ago: “It’s 11 PM. Parents do you know where you kids are?” Station decided to call homes and take survey. Results? More kids home than parents because parents wrapped up in their own lives.
 - a. argument arises: If spend time with kids won’t have time for myself... Just not true.
 - b. 1) kids not with us that long... 2) we do what we want to do...

II “I” - Take the Time:

- A. To be INVOLVED
 1. The lack of involvement in your kids’ lives communicates an unwillingness to know/understand them. You can’t know them unless you are intimately involved in their lives...
 2. Conversely, your kids can’t know/understand you as a parent unless you give them the opportunity to... involvement in each other’s lives is necessary and it takes time to do so...
- B. For IDLENESS
 - Mark 6:31-32 *“And He said to them, ‘Come away by yourselves to a lonely place and rest a while.’ (For there were many people coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.) And they went away in the boat to a lonely place by themselves.”*
 - 1. Jesus understands the value/need for “downtime” i.e. sometimes the most Xtian thing to do is to make “downtime” with your kids and encourage them to have “downtime”
 - 2. Psalm 46:10 *“Cease striving (let go or relax) and know that I am God...”* – fast paced world reeks havoc on our kids. Cults function under pretense of wearing prospects to utter exhaustion...
 - 3. Kids need to see their parents sitting, resting and being contemplative rather than deep run always.
- C. For IMPROVEMENT
 - Colossians 3:23 *“Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men.”*
 - 1. How is your home life any different than your neighbors’ and working associates’? Aren’t we “the called out ones”? Are your kids’ environments any better than their class mates’? Is Christ the Head of your home and do your kids unquestionably know this?
 - 2. Improvement in one’s personal walk with the Lord is absolutely needed in order for there to be improvement with one’s relationship with their kids. All of which takes time = intentional effort!

III “M” – Take the Time:

- A. For MEALS
 1. Illus. – E. Ray Jerkins, tells how he asked for assembly of HS kids “How many you sat down past week and ate at least one meal with family?” Less than 25% ate 1 meal in 168 hr period!
 2. Meals are emphasized in Scripture: Passover... Lord’s supper... Wedding Feast...
 3. Deuteronomy 6:6-9 point blank says use meal time to instruct/train kids... make meal time work!
- B. For MANNERS
 1. 2 Kings 2:23-24 where Elisha harassed by *young lads* doing/saying ill-mannered things... cursed them in the name of the Lord = 2 female bears came out of woods tore up 42 of them...
 2. Manners at mealtime... Illus. – Mary’s housekeeping job in Columbia, MO... manners to adults... manners to one another (do unto others as you want them to do to you) Matthew 7:12 *“Therefore, however you want people to treat you, so treat them...”*
- C. For MOODS
 1. Romans 12:15 *“Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly.”*

2. Take time to weep – kids need to be sympathized with and they need to be taught to do in kind...
3. Take time to rejoice – give kids opportunity to blow their own horn... don't be a wet blanket...

IV “E” – Take the Time

- Ephesians 4:31-32 *“Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.”*
- A. For ENCOURAGEMENT
 1. Colossians 3:21 *“Fathers, do not embitter your children or they will become discouraged.”*
 2. How do we discourage our kids? Mostly by neglect – expecting too much OR not enough...
 3. Encourage through example, by talking (Illus. – Schantz’s article “How to Talk to Children” – *Talking to children takes time and work, but if we do not talk to them someone else will. The messages they get from peers and media may not be the ones we want them to hear. ‘Childhood is fleeting,’ said Solomon. We can never go back in time and say the things we should have. Now is the time for every good man and woman to come to the aid of children.*)
- B. For ENJOYMENT
 - kids are intended to be enjoyed... AND to experience it themselves... take time for enjoyment!
- C. For ETERNAL MATTERS
 1. Nothing should be more important than the souls of your kids – nothing!
 2. Take the time to tell, show and prepare them for eternity – NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT!

Conclusion: Years ago Ann Landers, famed columnist, posed the question: “If you had it to do over again, would you have children?” Ten Thousand people responded. Of those, seven of every ten answered “no.” That’s 70 percent saying they would not have kids if they had life to do all over again. There were two primary reasons given: 1) Kids are too much responsibility... 2) Kids take too much time...

Parents, grandparents – time is of the essence; especially when it comes to kids. We must resolve to slow our pace from this world’s rat race... We must learn to say “NO” far more emphatically to good things and concentrate more on the BEST – eternal matters... We must resist the temptation to chase after MORE -- more pleasures, more hobbies, and more things... We must see that time really is of the essence!