

## Radical #7

# Radical Parenting

2-19-23

Eric Cepin

Two ideas to wrestle with today:

We are **all** parents: you are a parent if you are in the kingdom of God.

and

Who is God calling you to parent?

Radical parenting looks at parenting in a different way than you might think of it. In Mark 3, Jesus has been called insane and accused of being the devil and his family is worried. The crowd tells him his mother and brothers are there and Jesus takes this opportunity to turn this upside down.

### **Mark 3: 20-21; 31-35**

**Mark 3: 20** Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. **21** When his family[b] heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, “He is out of his mind.”

**31** Then Jesus’ mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him.

**32** A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, “Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you.”

**33** “Who are my mother and my brothers?” he asked.

**34** Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! **35** Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother.”

God invites you to look around and ask, “Who needs my parenting? Some of you with small children hear screaming in the morning and know exactly who you are to parent. But along with you, we are all co-parents! Furthermore, we all need parents. At 50, I am a son and I get some discipline from my dad even by the tone of his voice.

**Luke 9: 23** Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.

Part of taking up your cross and following Jesus is looking around our community and asking who you are to parent. The key point: Take hold of your priestly identity that you are a priestly

parent and a child in the kingdom. You are older than someone, either in your faith or your age. Hold on to this.

Parenting your kids is the focus today but this will all apply to parenting in the kingdom as well. There are hundreds of books and philosophies about parenting. I hope this helps you.

1. We must start with God the father. We must see how God engages with us to understand parenting. Two points:

The Starting Point: God The Father

13 Times God refers to himself as a Father in the OT.

Jesus refers to God as his father 150 times in the NT, and he refers to God as our father 30 times



A. God is Love: **I John 3:1** “see what great love the father has lavished on us that we should be” God likes to affectionately call you his child! He is giddy about you!

B. We will be *animated* forever! **John 3:16** He became like us (human) and lived a life we couldn’t live, he died and rose from death so we can be in relationship with Him and he can be giddy about us.

At the core of this, we are invited to share the love (*the giddy love*) of God with others: a full outpouring even unto death so your child, the ones you parent, can live. As parents we want our children to know they are loved.

#### Rev 4

**8** Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying:

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.”

**9** Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, **10** the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: **11** “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created to have their being.”

God isn’t just full of giddy love, however. He is also holy, terrifying, and worthy of worship...He is both an outpouring of merciful love and He is terrifying, holy, and worthy of worship.

As a parent, these are the two things you want to communicate about yourself:

- When your child chooses evil, you want them to know they are loved
- You also want them to have a certain awe and fear of you as a parent, just the way we have of God. As a parent, you are helping people taste who God is.

## Principles to work this out:

1. Principle of **presence**: We must be present to our children. In our culture, this is difficult. We must connect to the way Jesus is present to us and offer this to our children.

### John 14:15-21

**5** “If you love me, keep my commands. **16** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— **17** the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be[a] in you. **18** I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. **19** Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. **20** On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. **21** Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.”

There is an assumed obedience but let's put this aside. Notice that Jesus will be with his followers forever: it's important for your children to know that you will be with them. But it's more than that: Jesus also says he will not let them have an identity of not being wanted. Jesus says we will not be in this place: we will always be with him.

Your children need to know that they are yours. He will show Himself to us. He reveals himself to us. We are called to reveal ourselves to our children. So much of our agenda in life is really about ourselves and not about the people we are caring for: to be present and reveal ourselves to a child, we get on their level and engage with them. Eye level communication is important! As they get older, you should sit with them, take them out, discuss life, and be willing to reveal yourself to them through life.

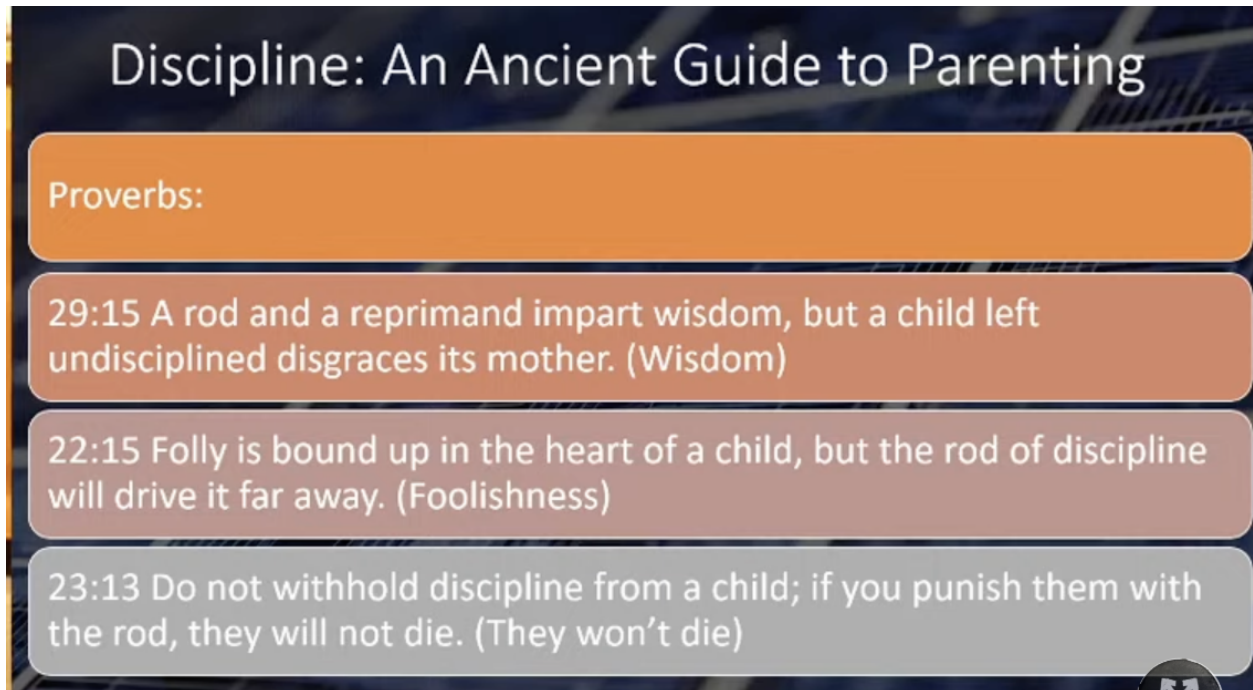
- 2: Principle of Discipline: 90 percent of parenting and discipleship is discipline.

**Heb 12:7** Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? **8** If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. **9** Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! **10** They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness.

The harvest is righteousness and peace. If you aren't disciplined, you aren't legitimate. Even at age 50, my parents discipline me. They might notice things in my life and use a certain tone that

I know is corrective. They might ask me to be kinder to my daughter...that is discipline. It is saying "you are my child and I offer you peace."

We have psychologized parenting in the world. This can be a problem because it tends to be more humanist in understanding our children and can ignore the Bible's way of parenting, an ancient guide. The following is about our own children and those in our kingdom:



1. (29:15) A rod creates a pain point: as a parent we create pain points for our children. It's also painful for us! Part of parenting and creating peace is knowing the pain points and going after them. An undisciplined child is a disgrace to his mother: inside, you're saying, that's not my kid. Discipline brings about wisdom: it is a pain point with instruction.
2. (22:15) Children's frontal lobes are not as developed. You may have heard they are not developed until age 25 but I say they aren't developed until we die: foolishness is always bound up in us. But with teens and littles, we think we need to figure out what they are thinking and we offer them lots of empathy. Reality is that until you extract foolishness from a child, they will not know who they are. When this happens, wisdom appears. The job of a parent is to extract foolishness. My parents are still trying to get along with me! This involves consistent pain points in children's lives.
3. (23:13) As a parent, discipline is hard for me because I don't want my children to feel bad or uncomfortable. It's hard for me to make anyone feel uncomfortable. This proverb asks me to do this anyways.
4. This final point is not a hard and fast rule. I hear from people that they are disciplining but the child is not changing. First, I say keep doing this so the child knows you haven't

given up on him. Second, we have a lot of things internally that we cannot control. Sometimes disciplining is just putting a finger in the hole of the dam. We don't know the ultimate power and result of this.

The two principles of presence and discipline help move people towards Jesus. Let's go down one more level to a practical model of parenting

### **Matthew 16: 17-19....22-23**

17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter,<sup>[b]</sup> and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades<sup>[c]</sup> will not overcome it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be<sup>[d]</sup> bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be<sup>[e]</sup> loosed in heaven."

.... 22 Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"

23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

Jesus affirms and establishes Peter's identity publicly: Simon is now Peter and Jesus tells him what his purpose and mission are. One of the keys to parenting is to continue to publicly articulate a child's identity and mission so when they step into adulthood, they know who they are and what their purpose is. When it is public, it is more believable. It changes their mindset: my dad does this in private and in public: This is who my son is and this is what he's good at. You will transform your children and those you disciple if you practice this. But right after this, look what happens:

The model is both private and public but disciplining is a *private* thing. Jesus pulled Peter aside privately; public disciplining produces shame. This is exposing and vulnerable and painful and doesn't move the person towards Jesus. For little children, when you are present to your children, it doesn't matter what you're doing. When your child needs discipline, everything else needs to stop. Jesus explains what Peter was doing: the pain point was that instead of being the rock, he

was being Satan. This would have been devastating. When it comes to discipline, use these four steps.

Of course, It will look different depending on the person's age.

#### The Jesus Model of Parenting: Identity Formation

1. You have Impact
2. You are choosing Foolishness
3. You are off Mission
4. Pain Point



You are all parents; if you are doing the will of God, there is a parental role. Who is God inviting you to parent right now? If you have small children, should you expand your net? Can you accept your identity as a parent?