

Parenting With Joy

The Grace & Growth of Doing Things God's Way

The Power of Example: More is Caught than Taught

Grace Fellowship Church, Pastor Peter LaRuffa, May. 8, 2011

2 Tim 3:14,15 ¹⁴But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, ¹⁵and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

1. All teaching in the Bible is inseparably linked with example.

Acts 1:1 The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began **both to do and teach...**

Jesus' teaching was never far from His example.

Jesus' told the disciples to take up their cross because He would take up His cross.

Matt. 16:24,25 ²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

Jesus taught humility because He modeled humility.

Philp. 2:5-8 ⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of death*, even the death of the cross.

Jesus taught His followers to obey His Father because He obeyed His Father.

John 8:29 ²⁹ And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.”

2. Our example preaches louder than our words. Remember—more is caught than taught!

Eph. 5:22,25 ²²Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord... ²⁵Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her...

Eph. 5:32 ³²This mystery is profound, and I am saying that **it refers to Christ and the church.**

Our marriages preach. They are supposed to preach a message that makes the Gospel attractive to those who watch... and no one watches more than our children.

3. **Pride** affects parents' preaching more than anything, and makes the Gospel very unattractive to our kids.

Eph. 6:4 ⁴**Do not provoke your children to wrath**, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Fewer things provoke children to wrath more than hypocrisy in their parents.

- A. Proud parents see their children's sins, but are unable to see the same sins in themselves.
- B. Proud parents refuse to be corrected by their children.

If the issue of "respect" is the trump card you play in order to stop your children from respecting you, respect has become an idol in your heart.

4. Parents show an attractive example of a life transformed by the Gospel...
 - A. ...by quickly admitting wrongdoing to their children. Our children are listening!
 - B. ...by quickly admitting wrongdoing to their spouse. Our children are watching!
 - C. ...by identifying with our children's sin...because we're also sinners!
 - D. ...by humbly receiving correction from our spouse and children... because we need it!

God is pleased to lavish His grace upon those who are humble...and that includes parents.

James 4:6 ⁶God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

For application & personal reflection:

Is your life preaching an attractive or unattractive Gospel to your children? There's one way to find out! Create a comfortable, unhurried, undistracted time with your children and invite them into an evaluation of your "preaching." The following are some questions that may help to get you started.

1. Who do I love? What do I love?

2. Is my life affected by the transforming power of the Gospel? Can you give me some examples?

3. Are there any "Do as I say, but not as I do," inconsistencies in my life?

4. Are there any inconsistencies in my life between the God I love and the choices I make?
