

# Parenting with Joy

## ***Back to the Basics – Examining Parenting Assumptions, Part 1***

*Grace Fellowship Church, Pastor Brad Bigney, May 22, 2011*

“Assumptions are the foundation for our thought life. They are unseen intellectual submarines cruising beneath the surface of our consciousness... We seldom think about them. Yet all our conclusions about life flow from these assumptions. In the same way, all our conclusions about parenting flow out of our unconscious assumptions about God, man, and ultimate reality. Collectively, they constitute our parenting worldview... Assumptions are very practical. They always put on shoes and go walking...” ***Gospel-Powered Parenting: How the Gospel Shapes and Transforms Parenting***, William P. Farley, p. 19

### **I. Parenting is Not Easy**

We don't follow biblical principles because it's easy. We follow them because it's right and it pleases God. That's our goal – not 'Easy' and not even results – but pleasing God!

**1 Corinthians 10:31** “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

#### **- Parenting is the Most Demanding Job You'll Ever Love**

**Deuteronomy 6:6–9** “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

To parent the way God parents us is to die to self.

## - Parenting Taps into Your Deepest Emotions

Parenting is hard because your emotions are going to spike and dip all over the map before the journey is over. So if you don't know Christ, and you don't have the anchor of a Savior, you won't make it.

**Colossians 3:1-4** "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory."

**Hosea 11:1-8**

## - Parenting is a Long Obedience in the Same Direction

**Hebrews 12:1-3** "Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls."

If the resurrection of Jesus Christ is real to you, then even when you don't have all the parenting answers, you still have the power and presence of Christ in your response.

**1 Corinthians 15:55-58** "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

God has solved your biggest problem. And your biggest problem's not a parenting problem. It's not an infant, toddler, teenager, or young adult problem. But through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has given you the power and hope that you need to persevere: to be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of parenting.

## II. Parenting is for Powerless People

“In parenting, your weakness will not keep you from effectiveness if you believe the Gospel. Your delusion of strength will! Because it will keep you from seeking the Lord... keep you from seeking His help... keep you from humbly saying, 'It's not only my child God is working on in this moment... He's also working on me... and I must take time to humbly confess my own sin... and to seek the resources of His grace before I move forward...'” *Taken from Case for Kids tape series, tape #3 "What Are Teenagers?"*

**2 Corinthians 12:9–10** “And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

- **What’s the biblical goal for parenting?**

**To faithfully shepherd your children in such a way that they are introduced to the Gospel and their Savior – not only by your clear verbal communications of the Gospel... but also by the way Gospel truth is put on display in your conduct and everyday interactions with them.**

Ultimately, you want to prepare them for death – by speaking and living out the Gospel in front of them – at close range.

We really only have one job as parents. There's one word at the top of your parenting job description – faithfulness. It's our job to be faithful - it's God's job to bring results!

### **III. Parenting is a Work of God's Grace More than Our Effort**

**1 Corinthians 15:10** “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”

**2 Chronicles 20:3** “And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord...”

**2 Chronicles 20:12** “O our God, will You not judge them? For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You.”

“Our reliance on everything but grace has us exhausted, worried, and secretly counting the days until our little cherubs are out of their diapers, or in school, or out of adolescence, or out of the house. The desire to rush through one stage to get to the next is the idiocy of believing that the grass really is greener on the other side. It isn't, of course. Don't rush the future; generally parenting only gets harder.” *How Children Raise Parents*, Dan Allender, p. 131