

Building Healthy Families

With Mark and Melissa Medley

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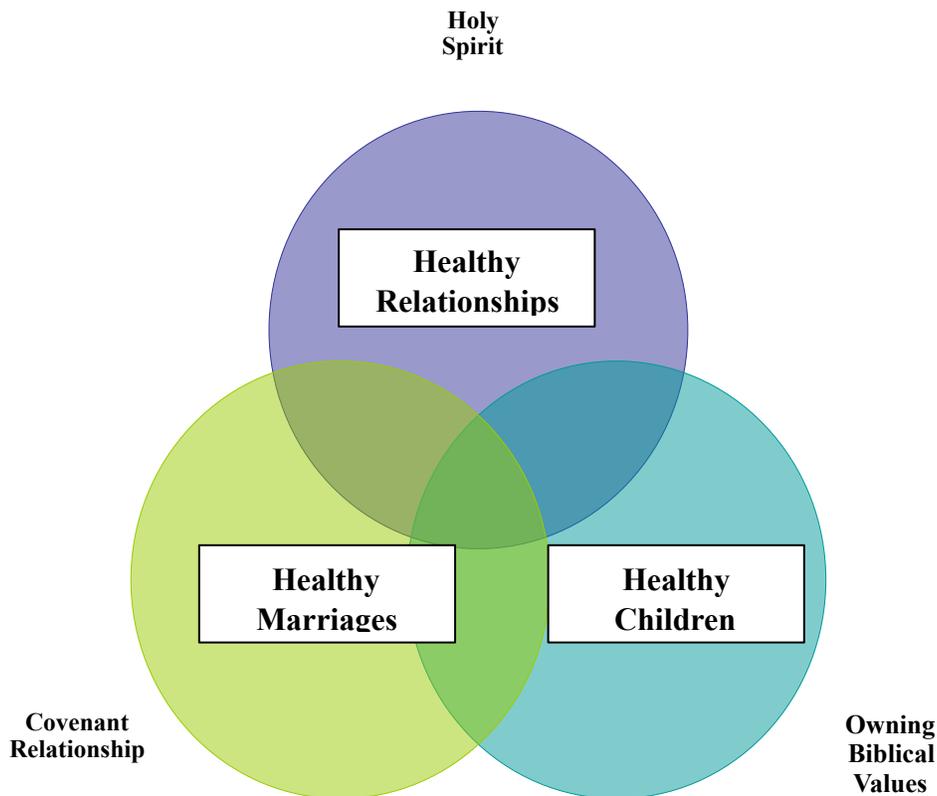
Considering the context

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Building Healthy Families

Healthy Relationships



Ingredients of Healthy Relationships

1) **Trust** – Firm belief or confidence in the honesty, integrity, reliability, justice, etc. of another person
All humans want/crave relationships. We have to work hard at creating a safe place, at making our relationships a place of refuge.

2) **Communication** – The ability to speak in a way that others can hear what you really mean; the ability to listen to what others are really saying. Our goal is to create an atmosphere where we are able to speak the truth in love; where we can be open and honest about who we are and what we think and yet still be accepted. This is part of emotional and spiritual maturity.

Levels of Communication:

- 1) Cliche (elevator talk; non-talk)
- 2) Information (what I know)
- 3) Opinion (what I think)
- 4) Emotion (what I feel - hopes, fears, etc.)
- 5) Dreams (who I am)

** Each level of communication carries with it a new level of risk

3) **Honor** – Respecting one’s value; holding another person as precious

Don’t merely try to fix or re-arrange their world. Honor is paying attention to particular needs. Consider the “one-anothers” of Scripture:

John 13:34 - love one another	Romans 12:10 - be devoted to one another
Romans 12:10 - prefer one another	Romans 14:13 - do not judge one another
Romans 12:16 - be of the same mind	Romans 15:7 - accept one another
Romans 14:19 - build one another up	Romans 15:14 - admonish one another
1 Cor. 11:33 - wait for one another	1 Cor 12:25 - care for one another
Gal 5:13 - Serve one another in love	Eph 4:2 - Show tolerance for one another
Eph 4:32 - Be kind to one another	Eph 4:32 - forgive one another
Eph. 5:21 - submit to one another	1 Thess 4:18 - comfort one another
1 Thess 5:13 - live in peace w/one another	Heb 3:13 - encourage one another”
James 5:16 - pray for one another	1 Peter 4:9 - “be hospitable to one another”
Phil 2:3 - regard one another more important	
James 5:16 - confess your sins	

4) **Commitment** – a pledge that, no matter the circumstances, I will do whatever it takes to make the relationship successful

In marriage this is called “covenant” - a holy and binding promise between two people to love unconditionally until death parts them.

5) **Relational Grace** – Bearing with one’s weakness; overlooking faults. Granting mercy because I know my own weaknesses

Understanding our differences helps us to value one another and to grant grace to one another. “Not wrong, just different”

Building Healthy Families

Healthy Marriages

We Believe:

- 1) God desires every couple to experience an excellent and ever-growing marriage
- 2) His pattern for an excellent marriage is found in the Bible
- 3) Your marriage flows from your heart – good things flow from a good heart... bad things flow from a bad heart. Good principles cannot make up for a bad heart.
- 4) Once your heart is where it needs to be there are specific, learnable skills that can solidify your relationship
- 5) The state of your marriage is up to you. As a couple, you make decisions every day which effect the quality of your marriage.

Here is the point: The beauty, excellence and fulfillment of your marriage is directly proportional to the degree of submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and obedience to His Word walked out by both marriage partners.

What is a Disciple?

1) A disciple denies himself/herself (Luke 9:23-24)

2) A disciple takes up his or her cross daily (Luke 9:23-24)

3) A disciple follows Jesus (Luke 9:23-24)

4) A disciple submits himself/herself to the Word of God and obeys it.(John 8:31)

Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed him, "If you continue in my word, then you are truly disciples of mine.

5) A disciple loves. (John 13:35)

Your personal love gauge: 1 Cor 13 - this is what real love looks like.

6) A disciple is filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18-36)

Ask yourself this question: if the members of my family were secretly polled on whether or not I was filled with the Holy Spirit during the past two weeks, what would they say? This is the best indication as to whether you are or not.

7) A disciple forgives (Ephesians 4:32)

"A marriage is a long-term, intimate, no-holds-barred, day-to-day, year-after-year, commitment between two sinners. How will they get along without forgiveness? Forgiveness is not excusing - excusing is making nothing of sin. To forgive is to face the truth: this thing was done to me, this person is responsible for it, it was wrong. Then to treat the person as though the thing was never done and be willing to reconcile."
Elizabeth Elliot

8) A disciple keeps his/her relationship with God as priority (Matthew 6:33)

- 1) seek Him first
- 2) Live a connected life with the Word
- 3) Live a connected life with prayer
- 4) Avoid spiritual adultery (the principle of reserved love)

9) A disciple does not settle for mediocrity (Ecclesiastes 9:9-10)

Strive for an excellent (unusually good, surpassing others) marriage.

Building Healthy Families

Healthy Parenting

Parenting is a Kingdom issue

Parenting is a priority to God. It takes wisdom, discernment, walking with God daily. Family was God's first thought when creating human society (Genesis 3). His plan is that the home be a place of nurturing, training, modeling and discipling for the kingdom. We do not separate family from the "spiritual" aspects of our lives - *family is spiritual!*

When faced with a situation where you don't know how to respond, remember these steps:

- 1) Stop
- 2) Pray
- 3) Assess
- 4) Act

You need to think before you speak, so you say what you mean and mean what you say. The correct response is better than an immediate response.

Parenting must be intentional

- 1) If you do not have a plan, you will be overwhelmed
- 2) If you do not have principles that guide you there will be no consistency
- 3) Dad and mom must be on the same page and have a united front (support each other)

Our first step: We will define our goal(s) in parenting so that we can become intentional

The _____ family's goal(s) in parenting:

Developing a Biblical Mindset for Parenting

Deuteronomy 6:7

- 1) God's laws are in our hearts
- 2) We teach them to our children
- 3) We do it as we live - in teachable moments throughout the day

How is Biblical Parenting Done? (Ephesians 6:4)

- 1) Discipline - correcting wrong behavior (suppressing evil)
- 2) Instruction - teaching our children how to live (elevating good)

Our goal is to raise a moral child: A child who has the ability to know right from wrong, guides his/her heart by biblical principles, and knows his/her need for a Savior.

Two Extremes of Parenting:

- 1) Authoritarian Parenting - enforcing outward actions but not getting to the heart of our children ("Do it because I said so")
- 2) Permissive Parenting - allow the child to do whatever he wants - let him express himself. (No principles for governing behavior; not consideration of others)

One great enemy to your parenting: legalism. One way to avoid legalism and the two extremes of parenting is to give our children the moral reason why, based on Biblical principles. It is not enough to tell our children what to do. It is not enough to manage their outward behavior. If we tell them the moral reason why we do it, we train them to think morally.

How does my child's moral conscience work?

Psalm 119:11 - *Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee*

- Notice: The action: David hid something
 The object: God's Word
 The place: His heart
 The reason: To maintain a right relationship with God

The human heart is a type of moral warehouse in which we store up moral knowledge to be used at a later time. The human conscience prompts us to do right and confirms us when we do. It also warns us not to do wrong and accuses us when we do. The parents' job is to put Biblical moral principles into the hearts of our children (Deut. 6). If there is not principle to stir the heart, the heart will not be stirred to moral action.

Moral knowledge is not a guarantee of moral behavior, though. If a child does not grow in the virtue of self-control there will be a gap between his knowledge and his behavior.

Transitioning from negative to positive training

Character Qualities

A key decision: our house will be characterized by respect

Respect for Parents (Exodus 20:12; Romans 1:29-30)

- * If my children disobey me, they disobey God
- * If I allow them to disobey me, I disobey God
- * Do not allow your children to disobey or mock you (Proverbs 30:17)

When our children are young, we lead by the power of our influence. As they grow older, we lead by the strength of our growing relationship.

Two types of submission:

Hupahouo - submit out of duty (because we have to)

Hupatasso - submit out of devotion/relationship (because we want to)

Respect for Authority (Romans 13:1-3)

Our fallen natures are self-legislating. Authority figures are the covering for our children and we must teach our children to see them that way. When I yield to authority, I place value on you.

Respect for Age (elders) (Leviticus 19:32)

To honor age is to honor God. For children, concrete actions precede believe, so we require them to respect and honor their elders.

Respect for Peers and Siblings (Philippians 2:3)

We teach our children how to empathize and think of their siblings needs and feelings. Remind them that they are best friends.

Respect for Property (Exodus 20:15)

We respect property not because the property is precious, but the owner is precious! When my children come to your house, you will be glad that I thought them that you and your property is to be respected.

Respect for Nature (Genesis 1:28)

WE respect nature because God created it, because he gave us dominion over it, and because when I respect nature, I respect you.

** It is from these six areas of respect that we teach our children the moral reasons why we do what we do and we do not do what we do not do.

The Principles of Obedience

What is the standard of obedience? Obedience must be:

- 1) Immediate
- 2) Complete
- 3) Without challenge
- 4) Without complaint

(When the parent sets and consistently adheres to these principles of obedience, the child alone decides when punishment is necessary)

Delayed obedience is disobedience

Partial obedience is disobedience

* True obedience is more difficult for the parents than for the children

Four ways parents undermine their efforts to teach obedience:

1) Threatening and repeating

2) Bribing

3) Negotiating in conflict

4) Misusing compassion

Principles of Instruction

1) Parents should expect an immediate and complete response

2) Never give a command unless you intend for it to be obeyed

3) When a child continually disobeys, the child is in sin. When parents continually reinforce that disobedience, the parents are in sin.

What is Discipline?

Christian discipline is a process of training in righteousness. It is not merely a way to control a child's behavior for the moment. It is long-term shaping the child's heart. Parents who put effort into training the heart will not have to correct outward behaviors as much.

There are two ways to discipline our children:

- 1) Discipline with encouragement (instruction)

- 2) Discipline with correction (discipline)

A word about chastisement (the biblical word for spanking). The Bible does not command chastisement, but it does commend it. There is a big difference between cultural spanking and biblical chastisement. Generally speaking, offenses that require chastisement are related to rebellion (defiant, disrespectful disobedience). Parents who train to first-time obedience will spank more at first but much less in the long run. *If the parent is consistent, the child is the one who ultimately determines whether chastisement will occur or not.*

There are four factors that parents should consider when deciding on a correction:

- 1) The frequency of the offense

- 2) The age of the child

- 3) The context of the moment

- 4) The overall characterization of the child's behavior

Repentance, Forgiveness and Restoration

Your training is not complete until you have trained your child to repent, forgive and restore

Repentance – The offender desiring to have the relationship restored. Love for the relationship puts sin in context and should drive the child to turn from the action.

Forgiveness – the offended one offers pardon (refuses to control the offender)

Restoration – forgiveness must be accepted, the offense closed and the relationships restored

If necessary, restitution – repayment for what was lost, stolen or damaged.

Discipline Issues

1) **What is parenting “outside the funnel?”**

- * Do not allow behaviors that are not age-appropriate
- * Limit physical freedoms (such as going into every room in a friend’s house)
- * Limit choices
- * Watch the child’s words. Phrases like “I’m going to ...” reveal a “wise in their own eyes” state of heart

2) **Whining – an unacceptable form of communication**

- * Children whine to protest an instruction or decision given by the parent
- * Children whine because it works
- * Ultimately, children whine because they are allowed to

3) **Temper Tantrums**

4) **Frustration Tantrums**

5) **Power Struggles**

6) **Lying**

7) **Stealing**

8) **Siblings and Conflict**

The Appeal Process

The appeal process bridges the gap between Colossians 3:20 (children obey your parents) and Colossians 3:21 (fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath)

The Discipline Flow Chart