

Saturday, August 29, 2021—Colossians 3:20-21 The Three Needs of Every Child

### Objectives

- Identify the three needs of every child:
  - a secure love
  - a significant purpose
  - a strong hope
- Demonstrate how these needs are met by Christ and imparted through the message of Grace.
- Offer practical tips for how to communicate these truths to our children (i.e. how do we model this for our kids?).

### A Secure Love

- At the core of grace is love—a love that delights in us in spite of our sin and comes to us free of charge. Love emanates straight from the heart of God.
  - Romans 5:8-9
- While all parents would admit to loving their children there is a big difference between desiring to love them and actually loving them in such a way that they feel secure are two different things.
- What do we mean by a secure love? A secure love is the kind of love they can default to when their hearts are under attack and confidently carry with them into their futures.
- This transfer of love is the result of parents loving their children the way God loves them. It's called grace.
- Romans 8:35-39—there is nothing that can separate us from the love of Christ
- Ephesians 1:6—we are accepted in the beloved
- Ephesians 3:17-19
- Ephesians 5:25
- Sometimes as parents we communicate to our children incomplete love.
  - *Sometimes our love is incomplete because our children feel they constantly to compete for it.*
    - We tell them we love them and then they watch us make decisions regarding our careers, our friends, and our pastimes that directly undermine our ability to invest the time in them that love requires.
  - *Sometimes our love is incomplete because our children feel like they have to earn it.*

- They figure out that they receive our praise and pride when they do things that make us look good or make our jobs as parents easier.

### **Love Defined**

Love is the commitment of my will  
to your needs and best interests,  
regardless of the cost.

- Doing the loving thing may not always come naturally. We need to keep our feelings in check and make decisions based on truth.
- Love sees our needs as a B priority compared to the best interests of the person we are called to love. It is not in our children's best interest to: give them everything they want, side with them when they are wrong, circumvent the consequences for their sins, facilitate false fears, fight their battle for them, or rescue them from wrong choices. Love is about meeting their actual needs not their selfish needs.
- Secure love understands that loving someone is often inconvenient and sometimes painful. Loving your kids costs money, time, and sleep. It might cost a mom decades in time originally planned to spend on her career. It might cost her her figure. It most cost a dad a promotion. It might mean that there are some amenities or lavish vacation you must do without. It definitely means eating crow, swallowing your pride, and asking for forgiveness a lot.
- Practical Tips for Demonstrating Secure Love
  - *Children feel secure when they know they are accepted as they are.* (Ephesians 1:6)
    - There are attitudes our children display that we never have to accept: selfishness, disrespect, deceit, are not to be condoned or tolerated.
    - I am talking about those things our children do to annoy, frustrate, or embarrass us that are simply them being who they are. Every time we point these things out, we tell them that they don't measure up.
    - Boys are berated because they are noisy, messy, or aggressive. Girls are often criticized for being too emotional, picky, or overly sensitive. Some kids are criticized for being slow, forgetful, or inquisitive, or for saying whatever pops into their heads.
    - As parents when we accept our kids unique characteristics we hold the same gracious unconditional acceptance that God has for us.
  - *Children feel secure when they know they are affiliated with a loving and God honoring family.* (Romans 8:15, Galatians 4:6)
    - Children know when Mom and Dad are playing church. When the grace life they talk about at church is manifest toward them.
    - Homes of honor understand forgiveness, communicate virtue, and place a high value on doing things according to the principals of Grace.
    - Parents need to be willing to admit when they are wrong as seek their children's forgiveness.

- *Children feel secure love when they receive regular and generous helping of affection.* (Titus 2:4)
  - God has hard-wired our skin to our souls. Somehow, He saw fit to configure our outer covering to be one of the greatest tools for transferring a sense of secure love.
  - Both genders need it from both parents.
  - Even teenagers still need touch, and deep down in their hearts they want it. They to know that someone isn't ashamed or afraid to touch them. This crucial during a time when many teens feel unattractive and untouchable.

### **A Significant Purpose**

- Significant purpose can only be found in Jesus Christ
- I Corinthians 12:12-27
- II Corinthians 4:11
- II Corinthians 5:20
- Titus 2:1-8
- Neutrality is not an option for our children. They will either embrace God's truth or run from it.
- Tim Kimmel, author of *Grace Based Parenting*, speak about four kinds of purpose kids need:
  - *General Purpose*—basic view of esteeming others as better than one's self. (Philippians 2:3)
  - *Specific Purpose*—helping children develop workable skills in every area of their lives and to refine areas of specific talent. (Ephesians 4:28)
  - *Relational Purpose*—is grounded on relating to others in relation to God's moral standards recorded in Scripture. (Titus 2:12)
  - *Spiritual Purpose*—a spiritual beings Children need to be instructed to find their ultimate purpose in Jesus Christ.
- The God of purpose has built an inner need for significance into each one of our children.
- Practical Tips for Instilling A Significant Purpose
  - *Children feel significant when they are regularly affirmed.*
    - As parents we need to positively confirm their worth so as to build a solid resistance against the insults and put-downs that often bombard them from our culture.
    - Affirmation catches your children doing things right. It notices when they do things you know don't come easy to them. It applauds them when they fix a wrong or dig themselves out of a hole they've made. I

thanks them for living out their moral principles and being willing to stand alone for their convictions.

- If we view our children as burdens, make statements about how much more difficult they've made our lives, or remind them of how little freedom we have now that they've come along, we're saying, "You lack value. You're not important to me."
- *Children feel significant when they know they have our attention.* (Ephesians 6:4)
  - It's hard to build a significant purpose into people we aren't paying careful attention to.
  - It's our attention to the finer details that tells them how much they truly matter to us. Our gracious God is a God of details. He knows how many hairs are on our heads. He's interested in us because we are fascinating to Him.
  - Children who get the same treatment from their parents—the same treatment that their parents get from God—grow up feeling significant. A deep sense of significance makes it a lot easier for them to live the Grace Life.
- *Children feel significant when they are gracefully admonished.* (Colossians 3:21)
  - Sin presents a clear and present danger to our children in terms of living out the purpose God has saved them for. To manifest his life in their mortal flesh.
  - A Grace Home should possess: 1) clear moral guidelines, 2) graciously administered consequences.
  - Scripturally our children have a bent towards selfishness, and they will no doubt put our moral boundaries to the test. However, the lure of sin can be curbed when parents model a life of grace and admonish their children accordingly.

### **A Strong Hope**

- Anything—minus hope—equals nothing. Hope is the human equivalent to oxygen when it comes to a person's ability to live effectively.
  - Ephesians 2:12
- Without hope it is impossible to live a balanced life. Far worse, without hope, people surrender to soon and die to young.
- The plague of today's children is a foreboding sense of hopelessness. It is the logical consequence of a generation of parents who took the permanence out of love and the absolutes out of truth.
- I Thessalonians 4:13—Paul uses the word hope 41 times in 34 verses in his epistles
- Romans 5:2-5
- Romans 15:13

- I Corinthians 15:19
- Ephesians 1:18
- Titus 2:13
- Practical Tips for Instilling a Strong Hope
  - *Children develop a strong hope when they know their parents recognize their talents, strengths, and weaknesses and turn them into assets for their future.*
    - Proverbs 22:6
  - *Children develop a strong hope when their parents allow and encourage them to embrace the Grace Life.*
    - Raising safe Christian kids is a receipt for spiritual disaster. Producing shallow faith, kids reared in this fashion will end up either over critical of the world system to the point where they won't want anything to do with lost people or they will become naïve about the world system and become putty in the hands of the adversary.
    - When we raise our kids to be spiritual safe first instead of spiritually strong it speaks volumes about how much faith, hope, and confidence we placed in our own belief system.
  - *Children develop a strong hope when their parents help them turn their childhood into a series of positive accomplishments.*
- Unfortunately, parental negligence—whether intentional or unwitting—can set a child up to struggle with hopelessness and feelings of inadequacy for a lifetime.
- Since grace and hope are by products of each other, Grace-based parents have an uncanny way of producing children with strong hope. If our children can't trust the adults in their lives, why should they assume they can trust in a God they can't see.

### Concluding Thoughts

- As grace believers we need to guard against turning our belief system in a checklist and our faith into a formula. It is easy to distill beliefs into programs and rituals that substitute for a true intimate knowledge of God and his Word working in us.
- I don't want my children to grow up in a home where they felt that God's pleasure was determined by their behavior. Nor do I want my boys to feel that there is no latitude in how they live out the different nuances of their personalities.
- Strident parenting formulas have a bad habit of using spiritual molds to create look-alike, sound-alike, and act-alike Christian kids.
- Grace-based homes should be known for clear moral boundaries and spiritual expectations. However, they should not be arbitrary boundaries based on unsubstantiated Christian opinion. Rather we should draw our boundaries around the Rightly Divided

word and the principals of Grace so that parents as well as kids can make balanced decisions based upon the faith application of truth.

- Grace-based parenting doesn't assume there is some kind of external checklist that can be followed for producing Christ like kids. Grace-based parenting works from the inside out. Fear-based parenting works from the outside in.
- Even grace families utilize many superficial measuring standards of fear-based parenting to betray and sabotage the Grace Life we talk so much about.
- In our next message Des is going to speak about practical ways of communicating grace to our kids.