

Heart to Heart

Week Eight — Grace-based Parenting: Learning to Discipline Your Children the Way the Father Disciplines You

"Grace keeps parents from tilting too far to one side or too far to the other. Grace helps parents find the balance point in a world of extremes and keeps them from investing their energies in a long list of things that don't matter." - Tim Kimmel, *Grace-Based Parenting*

Hebrews 12:5-10

Biblical discipline (Greek) = to train children; to be instructed, to learn
Punish = to chastise/flog → beating ... in the context of suffering!

Deuteronomy 4:36 "From heaven he made you hear his voice to discipline you ..."

Biblical discipline (Hebrew) = to chasten, instruct or admonish

John 1:1,14,16,17

It's not truth *or* grace but *both* characteristics partnering to parent children.

Definition of a Rule-Bent Home:

- Love and approval are based on performance.
- Rule-following is the measure of value.
- Parents are angry and/or punitive when children don't obey.
- Disobedience is met with severe punishment if not strictly followed.
- Parents are the voice.

Definition of a Grace-based Home:

- Love and approval are based on a child's value with no strings attached.
- Rule-following is for the benefit of the child.
- Parents are accepting and give favor when children deserve it, and when they don't.
- Disobedience is met with age-appropriate consequences.
- Parents *and* children have a voice.

Romans 5:8 "While we were still sinners/sinning, Christ died for us."

"Grace does not exclude obedience, respect, boundaries or discipline but it determines the climate in which these vital parts of parenting are carried out."

- Tim Kimmel, *Grace-Based Parenting*

Proverbs 94:12,13 -- "Blessed is the man you discipline, O LORD, the man you teach from your law; you grant him relief from days of trouble, till a pit is dug for the wicked."

Proverbs 5:23; 13:24; 22:15 and 23:13,14

Discipline is *synonymous* with instruction

Spare = hold back, refrain

Rod = like rod or staff of a shepherd

Discipline in a grace-based environment is the perfect balance for child.

3 Foundational Principles of Grace-based Parenting

(taken from *Grace-Based Parenting*)

1. How children turn out is far more contingent upon what is going on inside them than what is going on outside of them.
2. Parenting without grace undermines the desire of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit wants to work on the inside of our children to build a sense of moral resolve in their hearts.
3. Grace is not so much about what parents do but how they do what they do. (I would add – about who they ARE)

Grace is an atmosphere, NOT a formula.

“God helps grace-based parents see what matters and what doesn’t matter; what is an issue and what isn’t an issue. His grace helps you to see whether to write the rules in pencil or blood.” - Tim Kimmel, *Grace-Based Parenting*

Selfishness thrives in our reacting and grace is choked out in our reacting.

React or Respond?

React = to act in opposition to

Respond = to reply; to react positively or cooperatively

10 Characteristics of Grace-based Parents:

(taken from *Grace-Based Parenting*)

1. Grace-based parents honestly affirm their children.
2. Grace-based parents give their children and his/her friends, their attention.
3. Grace-based parents admonish their children w/grace and courtesy.
4. Grace-based parents instill hope in their children every chance they get.
5. Grace-based parents let go when it’s time to let go.
6. Grace-based parents don’t make it their aim to raise “safe” children.
7. Grace-based parents listen instead of lecture and pray instead of judge.
8. Grace-based parents create respectful ways for their children to voice their frustrations/feelings ABOUT their parents, TO their parents.
9. Grace-based parents accept that their children will struggle with personal sin.
10. Grace-based parents lead the way spiritually.

For Further Reading

Proverbs 1:7; 3:11,12; 19:18; 29:17; Luke 15:11-31; Romans 5:15-21;

II Corinthians 12:9,10; Ephesians 2:5-9; Colossians 4:6; Hebrews 12:5-11,14,15

To order a copy of Tim’s book: <http://www.familymatters.net/GraceBasedBook.asp>