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Introduction

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INTRODUCTION TO LOVING OUR KIDS ON PURPOSE

Loving Our Kids on Purpose is a method of parenting that reveals the Father's heart and will help to show you how to best represent Him to your children. All of us have had experiences with our parents that shape the way we see and respond to our children. Some of us have had great experiences and some of us haven't. We have a built in template of the way we see God and, without realizing it, we project that onto our child's template. It's how generations influence each other. We simply reach into our tool bag and present what we have to our kids.

SESSION TOPICS

Introduction

New Covenant and the Father's Heart

Freedom and Choices

Fear of Punishment

Heart-to-Heart Connection

Keeping Your Love On

Key Ingredients to Successful Parenting

INTRODUCTION

- Your parenting style is based on the way you perceive your experiences and the template that you were given.

- When you try to be powerful in your own home and hit resistance, you usually reach into your tool bag and pull out what your parents have given you.

- If you don't intentionally replace what you were given as a small child, then it's downloaded as your normal, your template.

- Your perception of love, authority, respect, obedience, the goals of parenting and the practice of relationship are transferred to you before you have had time to understand it.

"You're the best parent your child could have.
No one loves them like you do!"

~ Sheri

What parenting tools do you have in your tool bag that have been passed on to you?

Which tools are you currently using? How are they working for you?

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NEW COVENANT AND THE FATHER'S HEART

Isaiah 59:21 The Message *"'As for me,' GOD says, 'this is my covenant with them: My Spirit that I've placed upon you and the words that I've given you to speak, they're not going to leave your mouths nor the mouths of your children nor the mouths of your grandchildren. You will keep repeating these words and won't ever stop.' GOD'S orders."*

- The heart of the Father is that we build lasting relationships from generation to generation. There is a momentum in how we train our children.

- We create a culture that our children will instill in their life and pass on to their children.

- We want to lay a solid foundation where God's covenant can be laid and where our children can say, "I understand the difference between fear and love, freedom and control."

Jeremiah 31:31-32 NKJV *"Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah- not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt..."*

If I give my children freedom, respect & honor in my home, they'll download a culture that makes every other culture pale in comparison.

- The new covenant transition is where we move from an external to an internal relationship with God.

- No longer is there some kind of force on the outside that's trying to control me. Now there is an internal force that I relate to from the inside out.

- An external control system says, "I make decisions based on: Who's going to be mad at me? Who's going to punish me if I cross the line or if I do something wrong?"

- An internal control system says, "I make decisions based on: How's that going to work out for me? I have choices to make and a quality of life that I'm responsible to cultivate. What am I going to do with this opportunity?"

List the values and characteristics that you want to cultivate in your home.

Take some time and ask the Lord what He is saying about the destiny over your child/ren and make a list of prophetic words they have been given.

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FREEDOM AND CHOICES

Genesis 2:9 NKJV *"And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."*

- Freedom is important to God.

- You can't have love if you don't have freedom; you can't have freedom if you don't have a choice.

"How do I create a free place for my children where they have a choice?"

- My job is not to teach my children to let me control them; my job is to teach my children to control and manage themselves, no matter what's going on in the world around them.

- The role of the Holy Spirit is to teach us to manage ourselves in all the freedom that God has afforded us.

Are there any areas in your parenting where you find yourself fighting for control?

List what they are and ask yourself how you can respond in a different way.

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FEAR OF PUNISHMENT

2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV *"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."*

- Do I want to put my child on a track where they make decisions based on the fear of punishment or where they realize there are relational consequences for their poor choices?

1 John 4:18 NIV *"There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love."*

- The goal of the culture of Heaven is for us to experience maturing love.
- If my goal is love and freedom, I need completely different tools than if my goal is control and intimidation.
- "I have all the power and you have no power," is not true; it's painful when parents discover this.

yellow truck, red truck

How do you create a free place where your children have choices and decisions to make?

HEART-TO-HEART CONNECTION

Psalms 32:8 NKJV *"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye."*

The new covenant is about the power of relationship and love, not about behavior and obedience. Behavior and obedience happen, but they happen as a by-product of the ultimate, which is a heart-to-heart connection. It is the ability to lead someone with love.

- It's not about being controlled; it's about being affected, influenced, and connected.
- If I look into your eyes, I see your heart. If I see your heart, then I see how my behavior and my choices are affecting you. Then, I have a decision to make.
- Am I going to adjust how my behavior, seeing how it's affecting you? This is the test of love, of covenant, and of relationship.

Are you adjusting your behavior based on how you see it is affecting your children? If so, how?

KEEPING YOUR LOVE ON

Psalms 32:9 NKJV *"Do not be like the horse or like the mule, Which have no understanding, Which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, else they will not come near you."*

- I need to manage me no matter what you do today. My love is going to stay on towards you. No one controls my love but me.

- These little people just keep being people, their whole life. They're people, there's nothing you can do about it, so just get good at keeping your love on.

- Your children can learn to make adjustments to protect your connection or they can learn how to survive the relationship with you.

- If your child is making decisions based on whether or not they are going to be punished or hurt, they are not being obedient; they are preserving themselves in relationship with you.

I don't want you to have to be governed by pain; I want you to be governed by love.

- The foundation is to preserve the heart-to-heart connection; teach them what you need, and give them access to your heart.

- Parents, especially of teenagers, pretend that they don't have an emotional response to their child's craziness. Show them your heart. Let them feel the weight of who you are in this relationship. Let them feel the responsibility.

Teach your children the strength of love and heart-to-heart connection.

John 14:15 NASB *"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."*

- Jesus died so that we would be free. It's a brand new way of relating; it's rooted and grounded in love, not in the fear of punishment.

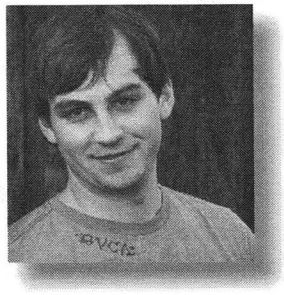
Can I Go To Public School?

When our son Levi was 14 years old, he was going to a Christian school. He said, "Mom and Dad, I want to go to public high school." He had 12 classmates at Bethel Christian School in the 8th grade and wanted to go to a school with 1,800 students? Let's do the math real quick. How many poor choices are there at a school with 1,800 students? All of them…Dang! There are a lot of poor choices there. "Ok. Um. Son, we're scared. We're so scared. Look at your mom. Look at how scared your mom is! Honey, why would we be geniuses to ever say yes to that idea?"

"Why would you be geniuses? Because, I will not break your heart."

Hmm, I wasn't expecting that. "That's a pretty good answer Son." He understood something. It was his job to manage his half of us and that he would not use the freedom that he'd been given to injure our relationship. He would manage himself.

For four years of high school, that's exactly what he did. He managed himself. He used that freedom as life for him, knowing that there were lots of choices and options that would injure our relationship, but he chose to protect our connection.



How would you have handled this situation as a parent?

What tools or techniques can you use from this story for your own family?

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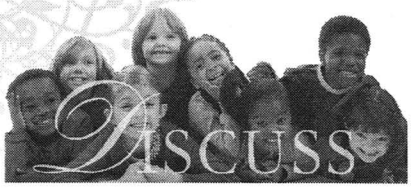
~ Sheri

KEY INGREDIENTS TO SUCCESSFUL PARENTING

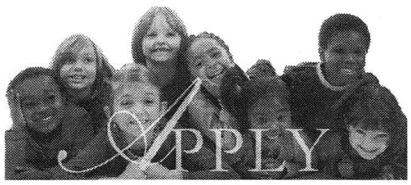
1. **CONNECTION:** Heart-to-Heart
2. **EMPOWERMENT:** "What are you going to do?"
3. **SAFE PLACE:** "I can handle your mistakes."
4. **UNCONDITIONAL LOVE:** "Nothing can separate you from my love."

The key for successful parenting is to protect the heart-to-heart connection with your child. It helps to give your children power in relationship so they can practice their responsibility. It creates a safe place for them to convey the message, "I can handle who you are as a human being. I can deal with people. I can handle your mistakes. There is nothing you could ever do to threaten my love for you. My love for you is absolutely unconditional."



Discuss these questions together as a class or in small groups.

1. What stood out to you the most in this introductory session?
2. How were you raised? What was the model of parenting used in your home?
3. Was the parenting you received based on fear of punishment or freedom? What did that look like? Give an example.
4. Discuss what you want to see in your own parenting as a result of this class.



Take some time this week to answer the questions below and apply the concepts you've learned in this session.

1. Think of a situation that happened this past week where you found yourself responding like your own parent would have. Describe.
2. In your own life, do you find yourself being controlled by an external control system or an internal control system? Explain.
3. On a scale of 1-10, how is your heart-to-heart connection with your child? How do you plan on building a greater connection?
4. Go through this session and write down the answers to the REFLECT questions in your workbook.