

Passing Faith to the Next Generation

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[0 : 0 0] All right, thank you, John. By the way, for those of you who may not know, John is one of the elders here at Grace Bible Church, and so recently we've kind of been on a rotation for each of the elders to take turns doing the announcements.

Sometimes you don't always know, well, who are the elders? Who are the ones kind of running this church? And so this gives you a chance to see who they are. John has been a faithful member and I think been on the elder board many times over the years.

I very much appreciate him and all the elders. I'll continue on with just a few more announcements before we get started. Let's see. Speaking, so next week we have a fellowship meal that we're going to have together.

It's a potluck, so just bring whatever you'd like. We have a recommendation. You know, if there's two or more of you, you bring a main dish and a side. If there's just one of you, just a side or a dessert, something like that.

That's our recommendation. If you come next week and you think, oh man, I forgot, please still stay out and hang out with us. The idea is to spend some time getting to know each other better.

[1 : 0 8] And so we'd love to have you even if you don't bring food. So please do that. Also next week we're going to be having our communion service, which we usually pair, always pair, with what we call our benevolent offering.

And I got in trouble last time because I didn't give people any notice. And so people who really like to give to our benevolent offering weren't prepared with their checks or whatever it was written to be able to give that.

We don't usually pass a plate here, but we do those Sundays. It's just an opportunity for we have what's called our elder benevolent fund, which is some funds that we have on hand for needs either in the church or in the community.

These aren't part of paying for the lights and the heating and cooling and all the things to maintain this building and run the church. These are things for people in need. Sometimes situations come up.

Somebody has a water heater go out or whatever it might be and not really prepared for those kinds of expenses. So we can help out with those things. So that will be next week.

[2 : 1 7] Claire's bridal shower is in a month. And if you don't know, well, who's Claire? So my son got married this fall, and Claire is his wife. I think there was a lot going on during that time, so we're kind of having a belated bridal shower.

And so we can celebrate her and really both of them, I guess. But any of the ladies, this is a women-only thing, right? Am I getting this right? No boys allowed?

So any of the ladies who'd like to come? Can they? Men are allowed? All right. Let's see.

Oh, and by the way, we're getting a little high-tech here. Did you see this little QR code thing? Somebody provided a link because they've got a shower or a bridal registry or whatever, and we're like, well, those links, it was like an Amazon link, and it was really hard.

Is somebody going to manually type those in? So we did a QR code. So you just point your phone at it, and it'll link right to that. I thought that was pretty cool. One sad note.

[3 : 33] I don't know. Many of you here may know the Arnold family, John and Francis. Francis just passed away last week. Her husband, John, passed away suddenly, from what I understand, a few years ago.

And after that, they just lived here on Shrine Road. And she ended up, because she was on her own, moving down to Florida.

She's been down in Florida for a while. And I'm not sure exactly what the situation was, but she passed away just, I think it was last Sunday, down there. And her daughter, I think, called the office and let us know.

So there is a, what do you call it, an obituary online Holly shared with me. You can probably Google it and find it, I imagine, to find out more about her and her life.

They were longtime members, from what I understand, at church here. And so many of you know them. The last thing, so we have January birthdays, by the way.

[4 : 37] We have a book table out there. We like to give away books. And so if it's your birthday this month, in the month of January, check out the book table and feel free to take something that looks of interest to you.

We do, by the way, we started doing this at the beginning of the year. On the back of your bulletin, there is something called Story Time and Movie Night. And so, you know, it's really difficult these days to find family-friendly entertainment that you can watch with the whole family and not be embarrassed or cringed or ashamed or whatever afterwards or have to have the remote control, you know, right on hand to skip this or that.

And so we put some movies in here and also some books. So this movie is called Facing the Giants. Anybody ever seen it? Facing the Giants? Oh, great. Many of you have.

Tremendous film. Really low budget. If you kind of look, this was the second movie that these brothers did. And I think, if I remember correctly, they only had one camera that they used for this film.

But they just did a tremendous job, tremendous story, heartwarming. And so check that out if you haven't seen it, Facing the Giants. The other one, Story Time, is really books mostly geared towards kids.

[5 : 56] It's things that kids can read on their own, safe, encouraging, stories with virtue and things like that. But also, these are great read-aloud books. And whether you're a parent or a grandparent, these are great suggestions of books that you can read to the younger ones.

We try to read three or four books a year out loud. Sometimes it'll take a few weeks. Sometimes it'll take a couple months, depending on how long the book is. And I can't remember.

Is this one we've read aloud? I can't remember if we've done this aloud or not. But this is a favorite in our household. So I think that's it. The next thing we're going to do is we're going to do our memory verse that we just started.

Last week, I almost forgot. Thanks, Roger, for reminding me. And so I made sure to put it in my notes this time. So Colossians 3, verse 1. And we've talked about this.

This is really about our identity in Christ and how that should impact how we live. The Bible says that we are buried with him like baptism.

[7 : 00] Baptism is, you know, this immersion underwater in some kind of way. And so we are buried with him, the Bible says, and raised to walk in newness of life.

And so this is pointing to that resurrection with Christ and that our mind and our thoughts and our attention should be on things that are above. Because of that. So let's read this together.

We'll go through it two or three times here. We'll start with the verse reference. And it goes like this. Colossians 3, 1. If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Nice and short one, right? We'll start off easy. Maybe by this time next year we'll have like ten verses in a row. No, I'm just kidding. We're not going to do that. But we'll do this again.

Here we go. Colossians 3, 1. If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

[8 : 07] Colossians 3, 1.

We're going to go ahead and get started. We're going to have Tim come up. Actually, could I get some help? We're going to move this pulpit out of the way.

In fact, I'm going to go ahead and switch mics and then we're going to disconnect this one. One of my boys working on putting some batteries in here.

As they're working on that, I've got batteries in mine. So that movie, Facing the Giants, as well as several others from the, I think, Fireproofs from the Kendricks and some others that we have on our Grace Family Ministries table there.

And all the resources there are free. By all means, I feel prayerfully compelled to put in something in the box or a basket we have.

[9 : 37] Normally, I have a little treasure box as far as a donation. By all means. And so inevitably, especially when you get a guy, a couple guys like Pastor Rambeck and I together, we're going to be referencing different resources and ministries and everything.

And that's a part of our stewardship responsibility as brother pastors, as men in ministry leadership. Ephesians 4 speaks to the responsibility of leadership to equip the saints to do the work of ministry.

So anyway, that's just a kind of a little bit of a rabbit trail, but not necessarily. Yeah, thanks for sharing that, Tim. So you talked a little bit about your ministry. You transitioned here from kind of a leadership role in a Things to Come mission.

Right. And now are doing this Grace Family Ministries full time. Could you share just a couple of things, just some of the things practically that you guys do at churches? Sure, sure.

The way I've described it is that we're continuing doing what we were doing with Things to Come mission, but with greater freedom and flexibility and everything. And so a lot of the things that we were doing, even like the Grace Family Conference last fall, weren't explicitly in TCM's purview and everything.

[10 : 43] And so, for example, whether it's in recent years, we've been here on Father's Day, just ministering, preaching, teaching the Word of God. But also next month, we're going to be in Grand Rapids doing a men's leadership seminar on convictional leadership as a man, husband, father in a secular age.

And that's on Saturday, besides ministry on Sunday. And we're actively, like I mentioned, getting a lot of content onto our website, YouTube channel, and even an article that I written some time back and I reformatted it.

Speaking of movies, you know, Peter Pan, all right, not to say that that's a recommendation or anything. Peter Pan's actually not a virtuous hero that we should look up to.

And so, and hence the point of this article, the irreplaceable nature of manhood. And why is that? What's wrong with Peter Pan? I mean, not that it's wrong to watch. It's a fun movie. We've seen it. Because he said, he confessed himself in the book, I don't want to be a man.

Yeah. Is that good? Is that a good voice? He just wanted to be stranded in Neverland because the crisis of modern manhood is such that perpetual adolescence, delayed marriage, many men, 20, 30 something years old, they're just, you know, living in their mom's basement playing video games.

[12 : 02] And it's just, okay, it's time to man up. But also we have some other stuff written for building a leadership culture. And this stuff's on the table and just a variety of things.

And just one of the things I've described as far as I'm in conversation with churches is that anything we can do to help, whether it's like a one-day family event or a conference or just showing up doing pulpit supply.

And that's really my heart and passion as a pastor. Yeah. Awesome. Awesome. So we're going to take some time this morning and just kind of have a chat between the two of us. We, I was thinking as we, we prepared for them to come stay with us and we went to this family conference.

That's where our hearts and minds are going to be this weekend. So why don't we just bring that into Sunday morning here. And so what did I title this? Passing faith to the next generation. So we just came up with a list of questions and topics to talk about regarding that topic, passing our faith to the next generation.

Is that an important thing in our lives? Without a doubt, right? A little bit. I want to start with, and we can, I brought up these, I found these stools so we can, we don't have to kind of awkwardly stand up here.

[13 : 08] Okay, okay. But. You feel awkward? No? I'm good. I like to sit down. Okay, okay. All right, gotcha. So I wanted to start off with this scripture from the book of Psalms.

And Psalm chapter 78. And it goes like this. It says, a contemplation of Asaph. Give ear, O my people, to my law. Incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

I will open my mouth in a parable. I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children.

Telling the generation to come. The praises of the Lord and his strength and his wonderful works that he has done. For he established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children.

That the generation to come might know them. The children who would be born. That they may arise and declare them to their children. That they may set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.

[14 : 15] And so this was a big deal as part of the story of Israel. And really the story of Abraham. Remember, God called Abraham out of paganism. Out of his own family.

And called him to be a special person and to be a father of a nation. And in fact, it says in Genesis 8.19, it says, For I have known him, talking about Abraham and his special relationship with him, that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord to do righteousness and justice, and that the Lord may bring to Abraham what he has spoken to him.

So this is a big theme throughout the Old Testament scriptures. But it's not just related to the nation of Israel. This is something that is important in all of our lives to pass on our faith.

You know, we each grow individually. And it's important for us to grow individually. But we don't just keep it as our private faith. You know, a lot of people talk about that. Oh, my faith is very private. And there are parts of our faith that are very private.

But that doesn't mean that our faith is just private. That our faith should be very public, and especially in our homes. That's right. In fact, there was one point, if you recall, brother, when, I believe, in the book of Exodus, you know, or Deuteronomy, the Lord is, you know, through Moses, is just, you know, bringing things to bear along these lines.

[15 : 43] In one point, if you recall, Moses said, the passing, the urgency of passing the faith on to the next generation, he says, it's not a vain thing for you.

It is your life. I love that. Yeah. So, question. This is an important part of our lives, is passing our faith on to the next generation.

Tim, what kind of mistakes do you see? Because it doesn't seem like, in our culture, we're doing this very well. And even back, if you look at Israel, did Israel do it very well? It seems like there was a lot of mistakes in Israel.

So, this is not a new issue in our generation. This has been a problem in every generation. And so, we have to be very kind of countercultural, and not always do things the way everybody's doing it, to be good at this passing our faith to the next generation.

So, asking the question, what are some of the mistakes that you see people making when it comes to passing our faith to the next generation? You know, that's a great question, brother.

[16 : 50] And, you know, as you know, having served with Things to Come Mission for the better part of five years, and then prior to that, we served in four different grace churches in different parts of the country, and hence our kids being born from Denver, Dayton, D.C., to the Dells area of Wisconsin, and then with five years with TCM, we served in churches, camps, and conferences in 24 different states, and then six foreign countries.

And so, the Lord has opened our eyes in a way greater than ever before to the state of church and family life here in our country, as well as on the foreign mission field.

And not to say that we are the be-all, end-all experts, elites, you know, listen to us, you know, thou shalt. But the Lord gives insight and wisdom, you know, to those who have eyes to see by His Spirit, and especially when you ask for that wisdom and discernment.

And so, not only in firsthand experience, but also just in research and study and everything. And it's been fascinating as we've visited churches and done ministry, and once again, it's not like we go in guns blazing and everything, but, you know, just, hey, come alongside.

How can we serve? How can we help? And there's churches that we've been at in the past, and then, you know, when we visit in recent history, or even just you're aware of some of the things in the history of a church.

[18 : 15] And so, oftentimes, it's very unfortunate as far as, like, what happened? And so, taking a lesson from Israel's national history, one of the fascinating things that you see, as far as these biblical injunctions, Deuteronomy 6, Psalm 78, you know, Exodus, you know, Deuteronomy, like I referenced before, is that you see the urgency from the Lord being placed upon fathers, fathers, you know, and grandfathers.

And so, one of the things that we have seen is that it's very easy, because of sin, for us to abdicate responsibility, or just outsource it, you know, a modern term.

And, for example, you never see Israel sending their kids to Mount Carmel to be educated by the prophets of Baal and Ashtoreth, or the Philistines or the Hittites, you know, the Canaanites, these types of things.

So, one of the big issues that we see in our culture nowadays is, I call them three S's, and one of which is, let's face it, it's schools.

And it's, regardless of the educational context, there are manifold issues, whether it's, you know, especially, you know, what I describe as the temples of secular humanism, in other words, public schools, you know, or even Christian schools.

[19 : 43] And there's, not all Christian schools are created equal. You know, and even, you know, even as far as the idea of drop and go, as far as dropping your kids off, you know, for Sunday school, and that's, you know, in that you don't do anything, you know, at home.

But even homeschool, for that matter. Not, you know, homeschooling is not a magic wand, you know, special formula, just, okay, you know, you can pick this up at the hardware store and wipe this on, you know, just wave this over your kids, you know, or like a essential oil diffuser or whatever, and just like, you know, they're just going to get it.

It's like, no, it takes work. But it's worth it. But also, you know, like I said, three S's as far as one of which is schools.

Another one is sports. Youth sports leagues, I believe, are the greatest competitor toward passing the faith on to the next generation in the Christian church.

I played college baseball. You know, honestly, you don't play much as a freshman, but my wife played four years of college volleyball. And it literally is, so I mean, we've been very athletic for much of our life, but it literally is a different ball game nowadays.

[20 : 56] And, you know, Sunday's just another day. Sorry, pastor, can't make it to church. And so we're sending a message to our kids. Yeah, church is important, but we'll make an exception.

But once you open the door once, it's easy to just do it again. But also screens is a big issue as far as screen time, media consumption.

And one of the things that we're seeing is parents, I just wonder what kind of discernment that they're, what are they thinking as far as giving very young children, you know, phones and just virtually unbridled access to screens and everything.

Yeah, with these three things, you know, schools and sports, because you have coaches, right, in sports. I think about discipleship and screens, right? Sure. And somebody's always discipling our kids.

That's their sponges, right? And so they're going to pick up whatever they get. And so we want to be the main disciples of our kids. And we need to be careful about who we delegate that discipleship to.

[22 : 04] And you can have positive sports experiences. Of course. And I think in moderation, I think what we see a lot of times today is that sports becomes all-consuming with our whole life. An idol, right?

An obsession, yeah. And so one of the things I think about this is there's this phrase, there's this kind of love of socialism today. And there's, in fact, there was a book that came out called It Takes a Village.

Anybody like that book? Does it give you positive vibes? I know who wrote that book. And the whole idea is, well, we all need to work together.

It Takes a Village, the idea was to raise a child, I think. I think it was the subtitle. But really, what does it take to raise a child? A mom and a dad. That's right. A mom and a dad.

And they need to be the ones that take that responsibility. And it's not like we can't delegate anything. Okay, we're having a really hard time in math. We need to hire a tutor or whatever. Schools, even coaches.

[23 : 08] All these things are good and profitable. But the number one responsibility is mom and dad to make sure that they're learning the things that they need to learn. They're being trained in the things that they need to be trained in.

Let me mention about that. The Christian worldview affirms the irreplaceable nature of the family. In other words, when you see in the book of Genesis, what did the Lord begin with?

He didn't start with a village or a town, civilization or government. He started with Adam and Eve. Defining what family is.

And really, incidentally, it's what's spoken of as the principle of subsidiarity. It's the smallest unit that is the most efficient and gets the job done. You know, we were looking at some of the Greek philosophers back in the day.

Plato was one of them. Most of us have heard of Plato. He wrote a book called The Republic in which he tried to describe like a utopian life. How should we live life?

[24 : 12] And his recommendation was that instead of having mothers and fathers, we should have professional child bearers and then professional child carers, those who raised children.

And so we don't want to just leave child raising to the unwashed masses. We need some professionals who are skilled at this. And that's kind of what we have today. Sure. Right? We want to delegate all these things to people who are professional.

But have we found that this really works? No. Not at all. In fact, a completely illiterate mother and father will do 100 times better raising their children than PhDs.

Amen. Every single time. Because there's that heart connection there that they love their kids. That's right. I mean, there's so many reasons why. It's not just that.

But this is part of God's design. Moms and dads are the ones who are designed to raise the kids. But it's so easy, right? There's so many opportunities, programs available to just delegate that to others.

[25 : 22] And again, it's not all bad. But we need to take the primary responsibility. And even as we delegate, well, who's this one that's speaking into the life of my child? And it can be great.

But it's not always great. And we need to be responsible to make sure that we know what kinds of things are being spoken into the lives of our child. That's right. The other thing to transition into our next topic is dads.

It's, you know, one of the primary drives of a man, and I don't know if all men in here kind of can reciprocate with me here, but is to provide.

I love working and providing for my family. And it's so easy to get caught up in that as my role of providing and making sure that we make enough money and provide all the things maybe that I didn't have when I was a kid or whatever it might be.

And we think, well, mom, she can take care of all the other things. I'm just going to delegate everything else, you know, whether it's the homeschooling or the meeting with the teachers at the Christian school or whatever school they might be in.

[26 : 27] And mom's going to take care of all those things because mom's better with kids anyway. And so dad focuses on just the money and the resources and maybe the protection and the security physical-wise, but then everything else is delegated to mom.

What do you think about that? Well, once again, it goes back to what the Bible says and what the Lord has laid out in his word. And, of course, we can always compare opinions and everything.

And, you know, somebody said about opinions before, they're kind of like armpits. Yeah. Sounds a little uncouth, but it's, you know, everybody tends to have at least two of them and they both tend to stink.

And so, but when we really get down to brass tacks, the issue is, hey, what does the Bible say about that? In other words, W-D-T-B-S-A-T. You know, what does the Bible say about that?

And so the word of God is very... It's like a good bracelet you could put on. Yeah, yeah, just there you go. Just, you know, start a new fad, new trend. Here we go. So, and, you know, the Lord very clearly lays out that it's the stewardship responsibility of men as, you know, men, husbands, and fathers, that we will give an account of before the Lord as far as shepherding our families well, sacrificially leading in love, laying down our lives for the sake of our wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, but also being intentional, or as was emphasized yesterday, as far as doing things on purpose, living on purpose, being very deliberate in, you know, what we're doing.

[28 : 07] And that requires forethought. That requires planning. It takes work. And there are things that we're going to be... There's a stewardship responsibility, but also manhood demands it.

It's interesting because U.S. Senator Josh Hawley from Missouri, and I'm sure many of us are very familiar with him, very constitutional, conservative, you know, lawyer, and, you know, he's in the U.S. Senate now.

He wrote a book last summer called Manhood. Highly recommend it. And he, in there, he speaks of the reality of that when men, you know, young men and old, when you just show up at work, when you step up and you start doing what's required of you as a man, when you step up and you show up, you know, to make a difference at home, your life starts to snap into proper order and focus and everything.

Because in the book of Genesis, you see the Lord put Adam in the garden to tend and to keep it. In other words, this is what we've been made for. But also, as far as in public arena, as far as taking dominion as image bearers of the sovereign creator king, but also being deliberate to fill this world with worshipers of the true and living God and ensuring that they know who this God is and they love him with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength.

You know, and also, as far as the importance of men taking responsibility, it's generational legacy. Like I said, stewardship responsibility, manhood demands it, but also generational legacy.

[29 : 41] None of us are going to look back on our lives with a heart filled with joy and gratitude and thinking like, oh, like if our great-grandfather, let's say, or our dad, for that matter, you know, as far as a little closer to home, and we look back and just say, hey, say we're 85 years old and we're speaking to our great-grandkids, and it's like, I'm so grateful that my ancestors who gave me life, humanly speaking, or my dad was a loser, or taking a line from that old musical, Seven Brides for Seven Brothers, Adam Pontipi.

At one point, you know, he lays into his brothers like, look at you guys, you're a bunch of like lily-livered, chicken-hearted lick spittles. Anyway, try saying that five times fast. That's a great clue. So point being, like in our modern vernacular, we'd think like a cream puff, milk toast, wussy type.

None of us are going to like be telling our grandkids, oh, I'm so grateful to have been born and raised in a family of spiritual nincompoops.

No. By way of contrast, no, I'm grateful to God. In other words, think about what your grandkids and great-grandkids will tell their grandkids and great-grandkids about the influence that you and I had in their lives.

You know, generational legacy. That's sobering stuff, but also exciting. Yeah. You know, I think about the home is like a small business, and the father is the CEO.

[31 : 23] You know, you might go to work, and you like, you know, maybe you make widgets, right? And you're just kind of told what to do, and you kind of do those things. And that's fine in a work situation, but in your home, you need to be the one in charge.

You need to be the one who's managing things, making sure that all the widgets that are supposed to be made actually get made, and that they're done with quality. And that requires forethought and planning, not just winging it.

Because if you have a business, and you're the CEO, and you wing everything, what's going to happen? Your business is going to fail. Right. So you need to put things in. And so in a family, you have systems that you build and habits and plans that you make for the future, things that I want my children to learn, habits that we do day in and day out.

In fact, if you think about, some people say when it comes to, like, professional development, that goals are one thing, and everybody has goals. But the people that actually achieve their goals are the ones that build systems and habits into their lives.

That's right. And you can do the same thing with a family. That's right. One simple example. Have a commitment to have dinner every single night. That's right. With your family. And man, how much of a change that can make in your family.

[32 : 41] Would you just eat together? You know, you won't always get to it. Sometimes you're doing other things or whatever. But if that's a consistent pattern in your family that you eat together. Opening up the Bible together.

Right. It's just one other example. These little habits. Singing together is a fun thing. You guys, I appreciate kind of demonstrating that to us all here. But what do you think? And I'll share.

That's not something that Lori and I grew up doing. I mean, when I was a kid, I played baseball. My greatest aspiration was to crush baseballs in half. And when I was disillusioned with college costs, senior year of high school, my friends and I, we went to go speak with the Marine Corps recruiter.

And, you know, because we were familiar with him because he's got a chin-up bar at the county fair. And if you crank out, you know, 20, you get a free shirt and everything. You know, tie the masculine bravado on that day. You want to, you know, gather up a large enough crowd, especially young ladies, and you're showing off and everything.

So, you know, that's the type of stuff like where I was as a young man. And when we spoke with a recruiter, there were only two jobs that stood out to me that garnered my interest.

[33 : 46] It was demolition and infantry. Blow things up and kill people. And so my dad's a Marine. And so he redirected me. And, you know, not to say that, you know, that would have been completely wrong.

But he saw some things that the Lord was doing in my life and just perhaps could sense that the Lord was calling me into ministry and everything. But the point being is that I bring all this up to say that it's what, as far as singing is concerned, just these redemptive virtues.

Even though I didn't grow up doing these types of things, it's what I describe now is the, you know, AM and PM rhythms. You know, as far as morning spiritual disciplines, but also evening spiritual disciplines of, hey, prioritizing the family table, but also the saints of old called family worship, where you read the Bible, sing, and pray together and everything.

And it's just a very practical vehicle to transmit the faith to the next generation. What if you can't sing very well? Well, thanks be to God, my wife does. I still can't sing very well.

But anyway, but my wife had a very good choir teacher in high school. And honestly, you know, ladies, if the Lord has given you some gifts, see it as a stewardship responsibility and trusted you by God to do something with those gifts and share them with your kids, grandkids, or, you know, spiritual orphans, as it were, as far as Titus 2, older teaching younger and everything.

[35 : 08] And so that's really something that's on my wife's heart as far as, hey, if she has some know-how, you know, she wants to make sure that her sons and daughters also have that same know-how. Awesome.

So to move on, I wanted to talk about the need for community and encouragement. Because we, it's the parent's responsibility, but this is not a, this is not the easy button, right?

It's easier to just, like, hire the professionals to do everything. The more we do, it's difficult. It's kind of, sometimes it feels overwhelming. And so we need encouragement, we need help. Hebrews, I've got a scripture, Hebrews 10, 23 says this, Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promises faithful.

And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much more as you see the day approaching.

That's the common scripture when we talk about making sure you get to church, right? But not just church. We have friends, community, Christian friends, and we can encourage one another.

[36 : 15] I wanted to ask you a question. In your, you, from what I see of your family, you're very intentional about how you kind of raise your kids and the things that you do.

All of our kids are perfect angels. Yeah, they walk on water at home, you know, just, yeah, everything.

But what, is that something you grew up with, or is there some other inspiration, or is there some influence in your life that kind of led you in that direction? Oh, sure.

You know, both Lori and I grew up in generally God-fearing Christian homes. Not to say that it was a total train wreck. You know, as far as in my upbringing, the deck was stacked against me, as far as from Ann's perspective, more than in Lori's.

I mean, she had much more of a deliberate, solid heritage than I did. Both of us grew up in a, just a, you know, Protestant denomination that just, that championed the rich heritage of the Reformation and everything.

[37 : 17] So we have a deep passion for church history and really the mighty hand of God providentially at work in history and everything. And so, but when the Lord brought us together as friends on campus at Trinity Christian College there in the greater Chicagoland area, you know, I was instrumental in, you know, hey, I was jamming for Jesus, crazy Timmy.

And, you know, yes, I can show you pictures. Because, you know, for example, first thing I ever said to my wife when we met, I was wearing sunglasses at night because the sun shines on you 24 hours a day, you know, when you're cool.

Yeah, so very eccentric. And the first thing I ever said to her was, congratulations. You know, you're the first girl to introduce yourself to me and everything. And she didn't run, you know.

So anyway, so normally I would advise young ladies to run, you know. But anyway, so having come out of Missouri Synod Lutheran Church, you know, as far as understanding the word rightly divided, grace dispensational theology, eventually I was instrumental in sharing these things, you know, with Lori.

And then, and it was a flashpoint between us. Eventually we gave each other up to the Lord because, hey, if we're both moving toward ministry, if we're not on the same page, you know, as far as a married couple, it's going to be an issue.

[38 : 35] You know, but the Lord brought us back together. And one of the first things we did is that we went to a Bible conference, you know, as far as basically a weekend of preaching and teaching of the word of God.

You know, and we were involved, you know, in local church and doing ministry together on campus. And then when we got married, the first class that we took at Berean Bible Institute, where I did the bulk of my undergraduate training for ministry, was a marriage class.

And part of the required field trip for that class was to go to a Family Life Today weekend to remember marriage conference. Very, very significant.

Basically, because when you go... And you're recommended, by the way. Yeah, right. When you go places, you meet people, and your life changes and everything. And so as far as whether it's books, resources, and everything. And then when we were in our second pastorate, when we were here in the Dayton area, we went to the Indiana Home Educators Convention in Indianapolis.

And, you know, I heard two well-known Christian speakers just emphasizing the importance of the Christian worldview and family discipleship. And by that time, we were hooked. Because when my first pastorate, we went to the public library, and that's where our oldest son, Timothy, was born in Denver area.

[39 : 50] We went to the public library, and we checked out a bunch of books, you know, on, you know, Christian education, homeschooling, these types of things. One of the fascinating things that stood out to us in that season was, like, you know, if your kid, you know, is just, you know, five, six, seven years old, you know, kindergarten age, as they describe it, is like, oh, like formal instruction is like, you only need like 10 to 15 minutes a day.

So point being, it was astounding to me, having gone to public school, and then 10 years in private Lutheran school, and my wife was in Christian school her whole life, that, you know, how much time and money, incidentally, is wasted, you know, on, you know, just the institutionalized regime is what I call it.

And not to say that it's a total train wreck everywhere, but you get the point and everything. The efficiency, you know, as far as parent-led, home-based family discipleship is unparalleled and everything. And so, you know, and since then, like I said, you know, books and other resources and ministries have been immensely formative in our, you know, worldview, but especially your son that already this morning picked up a one-year Bible from the Grace Family Ministries table, and it was at one of these conferences years ago, the late Pastor Don Webb encouraged us to get a hold of a one-year Bible and start reading through the entirety of the Word of God, as far as personal, spiritual disciplines, let alone, you know, in your whole family.

And that's been, you know, huge in every one of our lives. And that's certainly not something that I ever did as a kid. Yeah. But anyway. That's awesome. Yeah, I think you mentioned books, people that you've met.

Right. And so, you know, I've looked for, over the years, for families that are doing things intentionally. And I don't always even agree with how they do this or that on specific things.

[41 : 35] But when you see people doing things intentionally, I see a family where their children, instead of being kind of checked out and kind of the typical, like, teenager kind of checked out look, they're, like, attentive and they talk to people and look them in the eye and all those kinds of things.

Like, those are signs that there's something that they're doing well in their family. And so take note. And, hey, I want to be friends with those people. Those are people who are going to be intentional or are going to be an encouragement to you in intentional family discipleship.

And then books, other resources. You can get videos. There's stuff on YouTube. You can find people who, you know, have a ministry around these things. And just constantly kind of growing. You know, we're always students.

Right. And sometimes we need kind of a, what do you call it, when you check extra classes to get caught up on the latest. Yeah, continuing education.

Continuing education, yeah. So continually being educated on things to consider with sons and things to consider with daughters and making sure my marriage is doing okay and all those things.

[42 : 41] One of the things I was going to say in light of that, brother, is that we encourage families. Like in Deuteronomy 6, it speaks of, you shall teach them diligently to your children. You know, these things, these truths shall be in your heart, and you shall teach them diligently.

And he says, when you sit in your home. One of the things that we encourage people to do, and regardless of your season of life, especially if, you know, your grandkids, great grandkids, they come over on the holidays, or maybe they live locally and they're, you know, they're able to come over and, or vice versa, more often than otherwise.

We encourage families to speak, especially due to, you know, the secularized age in which we live. Things are, so much is happening, as far as how to make heads or tails of things, it's important to work through the, the issues that are in the headlines, interpret them, sift them through the lens of Holy Scripture, as far as the biblical worldview.

And so it's important to speak with our kids, our grandkids about everything. Everything. Everything. I mean, of course, yes, there's discernment, you know, needed as far as, okay, just, okay, the moral innocence of the ages of the kids and everything.

But, and that's certainly a challenge that I'm navigating right now, as Timothy's almost 18, but Noah's eight, you know. I mean, he's a sharp, sharp kid, but everything just as far as, as, you know, where they're at in their maturity and everything.

[44 : 03] But, but we bring it though. Children have questions. We all have questions. That's right. And they're looking for answers. And they're going to find them somewhere. And so if you're constantly talking about all the aspects of life, politics and culture and art and science and puberty and adolescence and dating and romance and relationships.

I feel awkward now. All those things. Talk about all of it. And sometimes it is awkward. Well. The things that you talk about. Well, Steve Farrar, and that's a case in point example as far as the author that's been instrumental in our lives as far as he wrote a book called King Me, What Every Son Wants and Needs to Hear from His Father.

He says, You have to talk with your son about sex early and often. And if you wait, he says, especially if they're in a school system and if you wait until you think they're ready, too late.

Yeah. You know, it's somebody, somebody has already gotten to them. And having gone to public school or even just private school, you know, I got stories, stories like, you know, we all do.

So. Let's transition here a little bit. I, I got this verse in Proverbs. It says, Proverbs 23, 26, My son, give me your heart. My son, give me your heart and let your eyes observe my ways.

[45 : 23] I think this is such a critical and important part of being a parent. This is a, this is a father speaking to his son, but I think it applies to both mom and dad, to both sons and daughters.

But what does that mean? What does it mean to, for a child to give their heart to their father, to their mother, to their parents? Well, and of course, you know, like the old adage goes, you know, the heart of the matter is a matter of the heart.

In other words, the, the, the attitude, the, the attitude of the heart is really what we're speaking of, you know, here in this text as far as I think of the principles, the virtues of honor and trust.

You know, just a lot of times people say that, oh, it's not about, you know, quantity time, it's about quality time with your kids. It's like, well, good luck if you're just, think you're just gonna engineer quality time at the drop of a hat.

No, it, it takes substantial investment of time, you know, to build that, that, that, that quality of trust, that heart to heart connection and everything, but also, that delight, that delight.

[46 : 30] I mean, do, do you, do you delight in your kids? In other words, like, like we were hearing yesterday as far as like, hey, I love you, I, you know, I delight, you are mine, basically, I delight in you and you, you make me smile.

You know, just as far as really, just you see that interchange as far as the Christ baptism and his earthly ministry to the nation of Israel. When the father speaks, he said, this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.

Do we speak like that to, you know, to our progeny? Because, that's, you know, if not, it's a, it's not, not a good, good thing. And I'm sure, even like you were sharing, brother, about like when you turned, you know, a certain age, your dad had sent you a, you know, a precious email and it was just dripping, oozing just with, with TLC, tender loving care.

And I'm sure many of you whose fathers are with the Lord or deceased that you would love to have received something like that from them.

And once again, I would encourage you, capitalize on birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, you know, different achievements, accomplishments, and just the ministry of presence and show up and make a difference.

[47 : 46] And in fact, my wife, she remembers very distinctly, you know, her last volleyball game, you know, home game, her senior year and everything, kind of senior, and it made it, you know, when, hey, her dad and mom were there.

You know, and it was a midweek, it wasn't, you know, just a, you know, a big, massive, you know, hurrah type of game, but it was just showing up and be there and caring for them at key times in life.

Yeah. You know, this verse talks about two things. It says, son, give me your heart, and then it says, observe my ways, right? Correct. And so, there's kind of two things and I see some, you know, some families focus solely on the observing my ways.

These are all the things that you must do and it's important as parents that we teach our children to observe my ways, to observe God's commandments, to be obedient, to be respectful, to, all, all these things are important but you also have to capture the heart.

It's not enough because what I've seen over and over again is families, they look great on the outside, everybody is compliant and then as soon as the kids leave the home because they haven't captured their hearts, they're gone.

[49 : 05] It makes me think of, I'm sure most of us have seen the musical, The Sound of Music, right? The Sound of Music and Captain Von Trapp had a very orderly household, right?

He had his whistle and his children were compliant and obedient and very well behaved, at least in public. Sort of. But the whole story, right, is that this lady comes in, Maria, she comes in and really...

The governess. And she captures his own children's hearts herself. She captures their hearts because she loves them and cares for them and gives them affection and talks about what's going on in their lives and she teaches him and later on he comes on board and realizes he missed something really, really important.

And he still is a man of structure and order and all those things but he added in something additional and that's that heart, that affection. And remember, in so doing, she captured his heart as well.

And so that was... Yep. Let's see. We're almost out of time. Let's talk about, real quick, there's several grandparents in here.

[50 : 21] There's a few grandparents. Right. And so, here's a question from Deuteronomy 4.9 it says this, Only take heed to yourselves and diligently keep yourself lest you forget the things your eyes have seen unless they depart from your heart all the days of your life and teach them to your children and your grandchildren.

Sure. We'll stop there for the sake of time but sometimes I think we can have the idea because parenting is very, very hard. There's a lot to it and then once the kids are grown and they made it and we're like, yes, success!

And then your job is done, right? Yeah. Move to Florida. You're out. I said year-round. Yeah, so tell me about your thoughts on what does the role of a grandparent look like with both their kids and then there's an additional layer, right?

Then grandkids come along. What are some thoughts or ideas on responsibilities of grandparents to the next generation? We can never underestimate the power and the mighty hand of God of interceding on behalf of your progeny before the throne of grace in prayer.

Never buy into this, oh, I'm just an old grandma lady and all I can do is pray. That may be from man's perspective all that you may be able to do.

[51 : 49] Because maybe your grandkids live in Florida year-round. You know, or whatever the situation. But uphold them in prayer. And in so doing, let them know that you're praying for them.

And, you know, as far as harnessing technology, as far as, you know, FaceTime or whatever, you know, handwritten notes and these, and therefore, in doing so, bless them. I mean, may it be oozing and dripping with TLC.

And not just blessing them and communicating gratitude and how much you love them because of what they do, but because of who they are. Who God has branded them in his image to be.

And the gifts and the talents and abilities, incidentally, that he's given to them to use for his glory by investing the time, talent, and treasure of their lives in eternity. But also, perhaps, you have a place in Florida or Arizona or whatever.

Use the resources and the means that you have in your season of life to bless them. You know, not manipulate, but just, let's face it, you know, some of the research, some of the things I've heard, you know, there's a burgeoning movement in the evangelical church as far as, you know, for grandparents, as far as ministry, and grandparents ministry because some of which either, you know, if they're not actually raising their grandkids, their grandkids would love to go on vacation with their grandparents because they'll pay for it and, you know, they get, sometimes they even get to pick where we can go and everything.

[53 : 17] Their parents are too crazy busy or whatever, but invest in them, but also encourage them, hey, as far as, whether it's different, you know, Christian conferences or, you know, worldview events, you know, just the discipleship formative influences, like, hey, whether it's things like Summit Ministries or other events, it's like, hey, offer to scholarship them and, you know, this is where you can even say and say, hey, I need a 1,500 word paper, though, on, you know, on such and such or, you know, as you go to, hey, I'm going to pay that much money or just be creative or even encourage them to like, hey, as far as Berean Bible Institute and it's like, hey, I'll scholarship you to take BBI's five, one or all five of BBI's biblical worldview classes or, hey, let's take a class together.

You know, Timothy's taking a class on cults and world religions right now, you know, online and everything. It's just a variety of avenues. Be creative with it. Those are great ideas. So, anyway. In gift giving, you know, gifts that have spiritual impact, books that are heart-healthy books that teach, you know, virtue, things like that.

you have, sometimes, you're in a situation where your own kids have gone astray and then you have some opportunity to provide some guidance to grandchildren that aren't getting what they need from their own parents and so there are opportunities there.

How many people have come to faith because grandma or grandpa or grandma and grandpa brought them to church or they read them Bible stories or read them books or influenced their lives in those kinds of ways and so, you know, as long as you have parents' permission and a lot of times, you know, that's great, then you can have an eternal impact on your grandchildren.

The thing I'd like to, and we'll finish up with this, is especially with fathers and sons, and this is really both a leadership thing and one of those matters of the heart.

[55 : 25] Sure. Give me your heart, son, is just that encouragement. No matter what stage of life that you're in, at any age, you can always encourage your children and they need it so much.

George presented last night and he talked about a football, or not a football coach, a basketball coach that just five minutes of encouragement like changed his, the whole trajectory of his life.

And it came from his coach, right? But man, how much better when it comes from dad, when it comes from mom. Just that word of encouragement. You're doing great. And does that ever get old?

Do we ever outgrow that? No. You know, you can be 95, your son is 75, and would he love to hear, son, you're doing a great job.

I'm really proud of what you've done with your life. Wow, that's tremendous. What a way to encourage the next generation and help.

[56 : 23] That's a big part of passing our faith on to the next generation is encouraging in the difficulty. Because life is difficult and challenging and there's always things to battle and fight. So encouragement is such a big deal.

Any last things you'd like to say before we finish up here? Yeah, and obviously seasons of life change as far as adult children. even we can already see with our older sons that our relationship is changing with them.

Yeah, we'll always be their dad and their mom and everything, but eventually you become more friends. And we're still, we still have a responsibility when they're adults and they're families of their own to parent them in the sense of like, hey, we're still dad and mom, but as you're experiencing with Ethan being married now, but your leadership is more by influence.

Influence, yeah. Influence, it's not, you know, thou shalt, you know, says the father, but it's like, hey, it should be consistent with those disciplines that you've been modeling through the formative years of their life and they see that you're the real deal, not the big deal, Christ is, and we need to remind ourselves of that, but one of the, a wise man once shared with me, he said, one of my mentors, he said that if you do nothing else in life but to raise your children to live a life of total dependency upon Jesus Christ, you will be a successful man.

And of course from the, and it's also been said that our children will live from their father's approval or will live for it. and ultimately it's our responsibility as dads, you know, and moms, but especially dads to point our children to the all glorious majesty of our father in heaven and hence what I describe as the blazing center of his glory vested in the person and finished work of our savior, Lord Jesus Christ.

[58 : 24] Awesome. Thanks for sharing that. We'll finish up there. Why don't you close us in a word of prayer? Sure. Sure. Should we stand? Oh sure, yeah. You know what I mean? We stand.

So thank you brother. This has been a tremendous blessing and let's pray. So our father and our God we are indeed grateful that you are from everlasting to everlasting the true and living God who is the great I am.

You are the sovereign creator king. You are the merciful redeemer of depraved mankind through the precious royal blood of our savior, Lord Jesus Christ in whom we rejoice in living hope for time and eternity.

How we pray, Lord, by a movement of your spirit igniting a passion and a zeal and the depths of our hearts and our souls, Lord, to be deliberate and intentionally passing on the faith to the next generation for such a time as this, O God.

May you be pleased to give your servants, your people, greater wisdom, vision, and courage for such a time as this, both now and forever, we pray in the matchless name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[59 : 32] May you be praised. Hallelujah. In Christ. Amen.