

“Raised in Grace”

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[0 : 0 0] 2 Timothy chapter 2, we're going to be looking at verse 18 in just a few minutes, but let's begin with a word of prayer. Father God, thank you so much for this weekend. Lord, thank you for the opportunity to catch up with friends we've known and, Lord, to make new friends, make new friendships, to get to know brothers and sisters in Christ, to build those relationships. And, Lord, I thank you for your son, Jesus Christ. I thank you that he is the cornerstone. And, Lord, I thank you for the foundation of grace, the grace, positional truths that we love and that we uphold and that we champion. And, Lord, I am so thankful that with Christ as the cornerstone and with those those doctrines as the foundation, that we can delve into these topics of the family and that we can discuss the very practical side of grace and understanding what grace looks like or what it should look like in my life, in my family's life, in the life of ministry, in the life of service to you, Lord. And I just pray that this time this morning spent in your word, it equips us, it challenges us, it convicts us and corrects us and instructs us in your righteousness. And, Lord, I just thank you for the opportunity to stand here this morning. And it's in your son's name I pray, the name of Jesus

Christ. Amen. This morning I want to tackle the topic of grace-based parenting. That was the email that Nathan sent out. We had a list of ideas, of topics, and I chose the topic of grace-based parenting. And I entitled this message, Raised in Grace. Raising children in grace is something that I think we as grace believers need to wrap our brains around. What does that look like? What does it look like to raise our children in grace? And, you know, it's interesting when you start talking about Raised in Grace, which, by the way, is part of our ministry under Bible doctrines. We're going to be having some things put out there, some writings. Eventually there will be a podcast for Raised in Grace. But parenting from a grace perspective, what does that look like? And it's interesting when you start conversations about raising children in grace, there are certain questions that just, for whatever reason, they come to the forefront in people's minds. And I was wondering what exactly to cover in, how much time do I get, by the way? An hour? 45 minutes? Or so? I love the or so. That's always good. What do you cover in 45 minutes or so that really introduces people to raising children in grace? And so what I want to do this morning is I want to get these couple questions out of the way early because if I don't tackle them early, people are going to be just wondering. So the first question that I want to answer is, you know, he's going to talk about raising children in grace. So he's going to give us a how-to. Because inevitably, this is what happens. Somebody has children and they're going to get up and they're going to talk on some parenting topic. And the people in the audience, me having been one of them, say, oh, he's going to explain to us exactly what he's doing. Tim has good kids. He's going to tell us exactly how he raises his kids.

He's going to give us a to-do look. Oh, or a to-do list. Oh, Pastor Paul's going to give a message. He's going to give us, do this, this, this, and this, and this. Do A plus B and your children will turn out just perfectly, just like mine. And I don't need to give the punchline to that joke because you all know that Tim's children are not perfect. My children are not perfect. But more importantly, you need to understand that I am not perfect. And my wife is not perfect. My wife is closer to perfect than I am. But we are not perfect people. We are not a perfect family. And here's what you need to understand. I'm not ever, ever, ever going to give a how-to message. It's just not going to happen.

And I don't think you should ever want to get a how-to message from someone. And here's why. I can, and I'm going to show some biblical principles this morning, but you need to realize, and I'm sure if you have children, you realize this, you are not, God did not give you little machines to program, did he? He did not give you, you may question this, but he did not give you just animals to whip into shape, to whip into compliance. Your children are not animals. Your children are not machines. Your children are all unique. Every one of them is individual and unique.

We were blessed with a set of twins. They are not identical. They are fraternal. But sometimes that doesn't help. Sometimes it's very hard to look at those two and tell the difference.

[6 : 11] Especially when they were little, my wife was the only one who could tell the difference between them. But as they've gotten older, what, you know, even when they were little, you realize, even, even in, when they were still in cribs, they still had very unique identities.

Mentally, they, they, they acted differently. They did things differently. And every one of our children is unique and different. They are not machines. They are not animals, as I said, to be whipped into compliance.

They act and react differently. So I can, I can teach you principles from scripture, but a, a how-to manual other than the Bible is a shortcut. It really is. It's a shortcut.

And here's the problem. If I gave you a list, do this, do this, don't do this, do this, do this, do this. You know what happens? Very quickly that list becomes law, doesn't it?

And we want our parents, or we want our parents, we want our children to turn out well. And so we want to just do this list of things, expecting the results to turn out just perfectly.

[7 : 35] But ultimately, a how-to manual, a list of things to do, will end up superseding this book. That list becomes the law.

I must do it this way. And here's the danger of that. Some parents will do exactly what's on that list, and will be satisfied with the results for all the wrong reasons.

But because you'll get compliance. Because some children are just compliant. It's their personality. Other parents will follow the exact same list.

Do it the exact same way as family A. And they will find nothing but frustration.

Because their children are not as compliant as family A. I had you open your Bibles to 2 Timothy 2.

[8 : 53] We've probably heard 2 Timothy 2.15 a time or two. Study to show thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Verse 18 says, Who concerning the truth have erred, speaking of this Hymenaeus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already.

See, and then look what it says right at the end of verse 18. And overthrow the faith of some.

How were these people having their faith overthrown? They were having their faith overthrown because they weren't rightly dividing. Now, there's a context to what he's talking about there, but how often do we talk about rightly dividing in the context of law and grace, right?

And we're putting people under the law instead of under grace. And how often do we discuss that in the context of positional truth?

But let me try and paint this picture in a very practical way. We want to raise our children in grace. And yet we find ourselves putting laws in place.

[10 : 08] We want to do it this way. And here's the to-do list, the how-to list. And we're doing this list and we're following along with that. And that list of things to do in raising our children becomes law.

Now we have law that's superseding grace. It's a law that we made. It's a law that we've tried to put into practice.

But we're raising our children according to those laws that we've put into place that has superseded the Word of God. And what is the dangerous impact of that?

Could it be that when we're trying to raise our children according to that list, that our child's faith is overthrown?

And could it be that if we are trying to implement that law in our family's life, that list of things to do, do this, do this, do this, and our children aren't turning out just the way we thought they should, that our faith is overthrown too?

[11 : 18] We throw our hands up and walk away because I'm trying to do it the way that the book says. And they're giving us the to-do list that's based on these principles of Scripture.

The principles are good. We need to apply the principles. But just because the book says apply the principle this way doesn't mean that's how it needs to be applied in my family's life.

I share that because I've known families that struggle with that very thing. They've been given a list of things to do.

And they're desperately clinging to hope that somehow this list, that everything's going to turn out just right and things are going sideways. And they're frustrated.

And they feel like failures as parents because their kids aren't those perfectly compliant little androids that they were expecting to get the results if they just did what they thought they should be doing according to the list.

[12 : 31] I think it's important that we apply biblical principles in raising our children. My only warning is that we are careful to apply the principles in every circumstance in our family's life.

It doesn't matter. Listen, it doesn't matter how I apply the principles in my family's life. I don't really care how Tim applies the principles in his life.

I may look at Tim's life and think, okay, I can tweak what I'm doing here and do it more like that. Or I can tweak what I'm doing here and not do it like that. What matters is, am I applying the principle from here?

Now, the second thing, well, along this same line, I think sometimes in this topic, we want to keep it as simple as possible.

A plus B equals C. We like simple math, don't we? You know, raising children isn't simple math, is it? Anybody who's been a parent for more than 30 seconds knows that raising children is not simple math.

[13 : 40] It's more like trigonometry and calculus, isn't it? And your child is the X factor in the whole process. You know, it's interesting.

In raising children, you're not solving just A plus B equals C. It's not 3 plus 3 equals 6, right? You're solving trajectories. What is the trajectory of that child going out into life, into the future, where they're headed?

And it's interesting. I'm kind of like a math nerd, okay? And trigonometry and calculus.

Some people just get nervous when they hear the words trigonometry and calculus, right? Raising children is like trigonometry and calculus. It's not like simple math.

Do you know what the definition of trigonometry is? You ready for this? You never thought this was what you were going to hear at 9 o'clock this morning. I looked this up.

[14 : 41] All right, we'll start with calculus. Calculus is the mathematical study of continuous change. Does that sound like parenting? Do you think there's continuous change in your child from the time they are born to the time they're no longer under your direct supervision?

Sometimes that's on a moment-by-moment basis, right? The conversation was going one way. Now it's going a completely other way. Something changed in there. I don't know what happened, but the trajectory changed.

All right? Continuous change. Trigonometry, this is how the definition of trigonometry begins. Trigonometry is the mathematical study of relationships between, of course it goes on to talk about ratios and other things.

Doesn't that sound like parenting? Parenting is about relationships, and parenting is about relationships through continuous change. Parenting is about trajectories. Where do I want my children to end up?

How do I want them to grow up, right? That is what parenting is. It's not simple math. It's big boy math, right?

[15 : 47] We as parents must apply the principles of Scripture through continuous change in our life, in our children's lives. We must constantly be applying the principles.

And how you apply the... You may have the same biblical principle that you apply to a three-year-old that you're going to apply completely differently to a 13-year-old. At least I would hope so.

But that brings me to the other question that people often ask. You talk about grace-based parenting. Raising children in grace. The question always comes up. Do you spank your children?

I'm not even going to justify that with an answer. Ask my children. But let me ask you this.

Why do our minds always go there? We're going to raise our children in grace. Do you spank? How do you go from there to there?

[16 : 53] Why do we go from there to there? Let's think about this. Is spanking biblical? Sure it is.

Absolutely. Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child. Proverbs 22.15 But the rod of correction will drive it far from it. Sure it is. And with that thought in mind, should it be a tool as we nurture and admonish our children?

Sure should. Absolutely. Look at Ephesians chapter 6 once. Ephesians chapter 6. Ephesians 6.1 says, Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

What happens when our children don't obey their parents? What is an option that could happen?

A spanking, right? Absolutely. Absolutely. I love that he answered that and not a parent. That's rich right there. Yeah. If we don't, if children don't obey their parents, listen, since you brought it up, see I didn't even have to say it, he did.

[18 : 26] I got my fair share when I was a kid. We could probably all share stories. We probably all got our fair share of whoopings when we were kids. And it probably had something to do with we probably weren't obeying our parents.

Certainly. But look at verse 4. Verse 4 says, And ye fathers, who's he talking to?

Dads? You fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

I would like to put out there that while spanking is certainly something that is necessary, it is something that changes attitudes at times, I would also put out there that there's a whole lot of times when, or maybe I should say it this way, I think there needs to be a whole lot more nurturing and admonishing.

A whole lot more nurturing and admonishing needs to take place than spanking in the life of a child. I'm not saying we don't do that.

[19 : 53] You know, when I was, many years ago, I went to a trade school outside of Philadelphia. It was 14, a little over 14 miles from Media to Jefferson Station in downtown Philadelphia.

And in February, I was in horticulture, so in February, we would get on the train and we would ride the SEPTA train into Jefferson Station and get off and go and work at the Philadelphia Flower Show.

Getting it ready, setting it up, working the show, tearing it down. And if you've never been there, it's a really cool thing to go to. But, it's like summer in the beginning of March inside.

It's wild. It's wild what they do. But anyway, sometimes we would go down in the morning. We'd get the train, we'd go down in the morning and 14 miles, 14 stops and that train would fill up with all of these well-dressed people heading to work in their business suits and all of that.

But, we oftentimes would work the second shift and the trains ran until 1.30 in the morning. And we would probably get on the last train out at about midnight, 12, 12.30.

[21 : 03] We'd be done at 12, get on the train by 12.30. And it was an hour, about an hour to get back out to the last stop. And, the, let's just say the midnight crowd was a slightly different crowd than the morning crowd.

It drew the finest audience. And here we are a bunch of college guys and we would get on that train and we would be packed in there with all of just the, the finest people in society.

And, as we would head out of town the train would be full. But at every stop along the way more and more people would get off that train.

They would choose to take an earlier exit than ours. It was only us who rode all the way to the end. Now, why do I tell you that?

Because, that's kind of like parenting, isn't it? We're raising these children children. And we need to nurture and admonish them regularly. But as we nurture and admonish them, they're hopefully going to choose one of those exits.

[22 : 14] So, they're doing something maybe that is not the wisest choice, maybe not the best choice, and we nurture them and we admonish them. And, admonish, by the way, is gentle correction.

And we're going to get to that in just a minute. But, but you're, you're gently correcting that child along the way, step after step after step. And you keep praying that they take one of those exits.

You know, but it's, it's a very select few who decide to ride the train all the way to the end. And, it's for those select riders that sometimes Proverbs 22, 15 needs to be applied.

But, let me ask you something. And, sometimes we have to hit that exit a little sooner than we prefer. And, probably more sooner than they prefer as well. But, but here's the thing.

How often do we hit that last exit? Everybody know what I'm talking about at this point? Spanking? Everybody with me so far? Okay. Just making sure.

[23 : 20] It's early. How often do we hit that last exit? No pun intended with the hit. How often do we arrive at that last exit of spanking?

Not because necessarily the child was needing it as much as we became frustrated.

We overreacted. we got tired of, because listen, parenting can be tiring, can't it? Parenting can be frustrating.

And, I am not about to tell you that I am perfect. But, sadly, how often do our children bear the brunt of our punishment?

punishment. Because I had a bad day. And, they did something that maybe was probably deserving of gentle reminder.

[24 : 30] better. But, I had a bad day at work. Anybody ever want to admit to that?

Your kids get the punishment for something because, okay, well, I'll admit it. And, the rest of you are liars.

we're not perfect, are we? Hmm. My prayer for us is that we never get to that place because of our hearts.

Hmm. Turn with me to Ephesians chapter 3. Ephesians chapter 3. Ephesians chapter 3, verse 1 says, For this cause I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ, for you Gentiles, if you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God, which has given me to your word.

How many of you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God? Roger, I just said it. Okay. Alright. Yeah, if you, we've all heard of it, right?

[26 : 03] I mean, to varying degrees, other than the fact that I just mentioned, we've probably all heard that phrase, the dispensation of the grace of God that was given me to you, or that was given to Paul to give to the Ephesians, to give to us.

Today, we experience, we understand the dispensation of the grace of God because Paul was faithful in dispensing what was dispensed to and through Him.

It goes on down through there, verse 4, whereby when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel, whereof I am made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

Listen to verse 8, unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.

This grace was given, this grace is a gift given to us today. How many of you are thankful for the grace of God?

[27 : 23] How many of you are thankful for the grace of God that brings salvation? We have salvation today by grace through faith apart from works. How many of you are thankful for that?

Where would we be without salvation by grace through faith apart from works? And how many of us are thankful for the fact that we are looking for the rapture of the church, the body of Christ?

How many of us are looking forward to being caught away to be with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? How many of us are thankful that we have eternal security that no matter what we do we cannot lose our salvation?

Nothing can take that away. Not even how we raise our kids. Not even if we spank our kids when we were the ones who were having a bad day, right?

We cannot lose our salvation for anything. I am so thankful for every bit of the grace of God that's been given to me, that's been given to us.

[28 : 27] Where would we be? I don't even want to begin to think where I'd be without the grace of God. But look over at Titus chapter 2.

Titus chapter 2. verse 11 says about this gift of grace.

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Who does that leave out? All means all, right?

hath appeared to all men, teaching us, teaching us all, that denying ungodliness and worldly lust, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

Now, everybody look real close at the end of verse 12. Everybody look right at the end. Do you see the little asterisk? Anybody see the little asterisk right there?

[29 : 29] You know what an asterisk is? The little star thing? Your Bible doesn't have an asterisk? Nobody's? It doesn't? Really? Because that asterisk should be to a footnote at the bottom of your page that says, only once you turn 18 and are a legal adult.

Anybody's Bible have that? I'm offering new Bibles for anybody's that does. It doesn't say that, does it? It says, the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.

Everybody. Grace just doesn't begin to apply once you turn 18 and are a legal adult, right? It applies from the time you are knee high to a grasshopper.

It's the grace of God that teaches me as a big human how to live, how to, how does it say it there in verse, denying ungodliness or worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

The grace of God can teach me as a big person how to do that. And that same grace of God that teaches me how to do that, guess what it can do for our little people?

[30 : 41] Same thing, can it? The grace of God, I appreciated what Nathan said last night, about how, just talking about these things of scripture with our children, how important it is that we talk about those things.

grace. Because the same grace that teaches us how to live is the exact same grace of God that can teach our children everything that they need to know.

How many of you want to raise children who are godly? Anybody want that for your children? How many of you want your children to deny worldly lusts?

how many of you want your children to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world? What is it according to scripture that is going to teach them how to do that?

The grace of God. The grace of God, not once they turn 18, the only answer to that question is the grace of God is the only thing that's going to teach them how to live.

[31 : 47] Now, go back to Ephesians chapter 6 because I want you to see something. Ephesians chapter 6 verse 4 says, and ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath.

I actually heard somebody teach this one time and his teaching on this was we need to teach our children grace theology or we will just frustrate them and they will face the wrath to come.

And I look at that and I think, okay, should we teach our children grace theology? Oh, that was pathetic. Should we teach our children grace theology?

Thank you. Thank you. We certainly should. We certainly need them to understand the grace of God. We need to understand all those positional truths. Absolutely we do. And if our children don't learn those things, are there consequences?

Listen, your theology affects your life, your everyday life. But I wonder if that statement wasn't made to avoid the real issue that he's talking about here.

[33 : 09] You see, as fathers, Ephesians 6, 4 is written to me. It's written to you. Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath.

What does that mean? In the very simplest, what does that mean? There's not a dad in this room that can't understand exactly what that means. Why would God need to put in his word, fathers, provoke not your children to wrath?

Seems to me that God would put that in there because fathers probably struggle with provoking their children to wrath. What is the phrase, provoke not?

What does provoke? To anger? To irritate? How about exasperate? Do you think as fathers we can exasperate our children if we're not careful?

Sure we can. Push them away. Sometimes as dads we can be drill sergeants, task oriented, so wanting to accomplish whatever it is that the goal we have set before us that we become almost cruel taskmasters rather than loving fathers.

- [34 : 42] If we want to raise our children in grace, shouldn't we at least look at the relationship? Is our heavenly father a cruel taskmaster with us? Shouldn't we seek to emulate that relationship with our children?

He says, provoke not your children to wrath. Don't exasperate them. Don't irritate them. How might we do that? Unreasonable demands and commands. Needless severity.

We're being severe when they weren't in need of us being severe for any reason. Maybe we've got some anger issues that we need to deal with.

Colossians 3.21, we won't go there, but Colossians 3.21 talks about this same topic, but it adds this phrase, lest they be discouraged. How easy is it to discourage children?

You know, it's interesting, I've been thinking a lot about this lately. Sometimes it feels like it's almost impossible to discourage children. Think about this for a minute.

- [36 : 05] Your kid, when they're little, they just want to talk to you almost all the time. They just want to tell you, hey dad, dad, dad, mom, mom, let me tell you this, mom.

And they just repeat the same things over and over and over again. And they get older and they still want to talk to you. And you know, one of the saddest things today, I took mine off, my phone.

They want to talk to you and we're just sitting there scrolling away. You know, sometimes we don't have to be the mean mom or the mean dad to exasperate our children.

We just ignore them. And you know what's crazy is we're ignoring them, we're exasperating them and they keep coming back. But at some point, they stop, don't they?

They stop trying. Colossians 3.21 says, lest they be discouraged.

- [37 : 12] We can exasperate our children in so many ways. See, raising children in grace isn't so much about the children as it is about the parents, is it?

The children are going to do what children always do in situations. It's how we are raising the children that we need to discuss.

How do we deal with those topics, with those issues, with those principles? How do we apply them? What is it in our life that needs to be dealt with to allow us to raise our children the way our heavenly father is raising us?

And then it says, rather than provoke our children to wrath, we need to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Nurture.

We understand that word, right? It means to educate. It means to care for. It means to come alongside. It has this idea of covering every area of their life.

- [38 : 20] When we're nurturing someone, we're covering, it's the education of their entire life. We nurture them and care for them and take them step by step through everything that they go through.

You know what that requires? Nathan covered it last night. Being together. Being together. If you're going to nurture your child, you need to be there. You know what's interesting?

I'm getting ahead of myself, but our relationship with our children, if we are going to raise them in grace, needs to reflect the relationship that we have with our Heavenly Father.

What does that relationship look like? Well, there's open communication, right? He talks to us through His Word. We talk to Him in prayer. Conversation.

But let me give you something else about grace. The moment you trust Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, what happens? Who takes up residence inside of you?

[39 : 28] Holy Spirit. Romans talks about Christ in you. Right? When does He move out? Never. Never does.

He's with you everywhere you go. Hmm. What does that say about how we should spend time with our children? We should probably spend every moment together as much as is humanly possible because that's the relationship He has with us.

Always together. How important is it that we are always with our children nurturing? And by the way, admonish. Admonish. I challenge you to look up the word admonish.

Look it up. Do you know what the word admonish means? To put in mind, to warn, but the one that hit me, it was like getting a two by four between the eyes.

The word admonish means remind. Does that sound like parenting? You have little kids. How often do you have to remind them?

[40 : 42] Did you wash your hands? Every time they come out of the bathroom, right? Every time. You were in that shower for 15 seconds.

You can't possibly have been washed. Go get in again. We remind them. And this is where we come back to the spanking thing, right? How often do they get the short end of the stick, no pun intended, because we get tired of reminding them.

Now, there are times when it's necessary. I get it. I'm not saying not to. What I'm saying is Scripture says in Ephesians 6, 4, provoke not your fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, bring them up in the nurture and admonition, and remind them of the Lord.

That's literally what the verse is saying. God is saying, God who created you and I, God who created human life, God who ordained the family, God who put mothers, husbands and wives together, made them mothers and fathers, gave them children.

He says, listen, don't provoke your children to wrath in the many ways that you are able to do that as a human being, but rather bring them up in the nurture, spending every moment with them, nurturing and educating them and teaching them and reminding them of the Lord.

[42 : 14] How much of parenting, parenting, how much of our parenting, I'll ask it this way, how much of our parenting should be educating our children in the things of the Lord and reminding our children of the things of the Lord?

When they're not doing what they should be doing, we need to take that moment to remind them. I think sometimes, it's just my opinion for what it's worth, do with it what you want, but I think sometimes we outsource far too much of our parenting.

even when it comes, especially when it comes to the things of the Lord. We outsource it.

We outsource it to the preacher, we outsource it to the Sunday school teacher, we outsource it to the youth group leader, we outsource it to a million options that God has entrusted to us, to me, to my wife.

It's my responsibility. How do we nurture and admonish our children?

[43 : 54] And I'll give you two principles this morning. Am I done in five minutes? Is that about right? Okay. Here's the two principles. Nathan walked all over the first one last night, so I can be very brief on this one.

The first principle that we need to apply when raising our children. These are the two pillars. You need to have these two pillars. If you want to raise your children in grace, you cannot raise children in grace without these two pillars, these two principles applied faithfully always.

Principle number one is relationship. The relationship between you and your child must be protected at all costs. It must be protected.

I already talked about what makes up a relationship. There's communication. There's interaction. Just because you're under the same roof doesn't mean you have relationship. Just because you're under the same roof doesn't mean you have communication.

It doesn't mean you have interaction. I loved what Nathan said last night about doing things together. Whether it's working or whether it's watching a movie together, you're doing it together.

[45 : 07] How important is that? What value is there in that? It's great value because it's about that relationship. And listen, the relationship between you and your child is not the most important relationship.

This is the most important relationship. But it's this relationship that is going to help them to understand and strengthen and grow in this relationship.

You are the one that's going to introduce them to Christ. You are going to be the one that introduces them to salvation in Christ, hopefully. But hopefully it goes far beyond that.

Hopefully it's this relationship and them watching you and them learning from you that teaches them what this relationship that you have this way, that they can have this way, should look like.

They need to see what it's like to have a relationship with their Heavenly Father. And what it looks like on a day-to-day basis and how you treat your child, how you nurture and admonish your child should be a direct reflection of how your Heavenly Father nurtures and admonishes you.

[46 : 24] And listen, my Heavenly Father nurtures and admonishes me a lot with His words. And that means that I need to nurture and admonish my children a lot with words.

Hopefully His words coming out my mouth in various, you know, whether it's directly the Word of God or the principle, helping them to understand that.

Nathan's hiding in the back, but he has a shirt on today that I really like. Stand up once. I can't remember what it says. Rambeck Bible Class. What's the back say? Bible literacy begins in the home, and then I know it's Deuteronomy 6.

I can't read it from here. My eyes aren't that good. But Deuteronomy 6. I actually had Deuteronomy 6 in my notes, and we're not going to have the time to go there. But Deuteronomy 6 talks about when you're lying down and when you're standing up and when you're walking by the way and all of these things.

Listen, we can give you a to-do list, which I said I wouldn't give you. I won't give you a to-do list, but it's easy to come up with a to-do list. Listen, we need to have family worship.

[47 : 40] We need to pray at meals together. We can do all those things. And listen, I am not about to say those aren't good things. Those are great things to do. But let me tell you something.

As important as those things are, as those organized moments are, as valuable as those organized moments are, I find even greater value in those organic moments that just happen.

We were driving the other day heading to ultimately here, and I was thinking about friends that we have in, that went through the hurricane down there, both hurricanes.

And I turned off the radio and I said, Joseph, will you pray for them? It was just organic. It was just a thought that was on my head. Because there's a danger to family worship and praying before meals that is, we can only, this is the organized learning time.

This is where this takes place. And now we can just compartmentalize that away and everything else is just whatever. Every moment of our lives, as parents, we need to be spiritually engaged in raising our children.

[49 : 10] We need to be spiritually engaged in this relationship with our children. Introducing them to this relationship. Pointing out truths of this relationship in every moment, in every aspect of our lives.

The Northern Lights, what a great opportunity to talk about it. But just walking down the street and seeing someone. I've shared this before. I was with my family here.

I was with my family here. And we went to a store. This is my public confession. You don't have to do public confession, but I will. We went to a store and there was somebody in the store and I couldn't identify them.

Okay? We live in a day and age where you can't identify certain individuals sometimes. And I sent my daughter over there. I said, go see if that's a guy or a girl. What is that?

What is that? Shame on me! Shame on me! I know sometimes curiosity kills the cat. It was killing me.

[50 : 09] But here's the thing. Here's the thing. What did I just teach my children? What did I just teach them? There are weird people out there.

There are freaks out there. There are. You know what I should have done in that moment and had to apologize to my kids for? That person probably needs Christ.

In fact, they're broadcasting the fact that they probably need Jesus Christ. As a father, I missed a great opportunity to teach my children, to raise my children in grace, to talk about, listen, you have this relationship with Christ and that person over there needs that relationship with Christ.

I need to care more for their soul. We need to care more for the soul of a person than the look of a person. All right.

The second principle, since I'm out of time, I'll just give it to you real quick. So the first principle is relationship. We need to, everything we do needs to be about the relationship that we have with Christ, introducing our children to that relationship, demonstrating to our children what that relationship looks like.

[51 : 25] And the only way we can do that is if we maintain this relationship. The second one, though, principle number two is identity. We have an identity, don't we?

We have an identity in Christ. We can talk about that. Ephesians chapter three versus, I'm sorry, Ephesians chapter four. No, Ephesians chapter one. I'll get there.

Ephesians chapter one, the identity of Christ. We have blessed with all spiritual blessings and heavenly places in Christ. Colossians chapter three, we are dead. That's also part of our identity.

We are dead. All right? But, and we need to understand that identity. We need to introduce our children to that identity. But as a family, what is the identity of your family?

Have you ever thought about that, parents? And do your children know the identity of your family? How does your family identify in life?

[52 : 26] And quite frankly, I don't care how other people identify you as a family. What I care about is, do you understand what your identity is as a family?

Listen, you can go through scripture. Noah, did Noah have an identity in Genesis chapter six? His identity was completely different. His family's identity was completely different than everybody else who was destroyed in the flood.

What about Joshua 24, 15? As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. That's an identity. That's a verse that gives the identity of his family.

What about the children of Issachar, 1 Chronicles 12, 32? They had understanding of the times. That was their identity. What about Jeremiah 35, the Rechabites?

They weren't drinking certain things, drinking wine, doing other things. They had this identity. What is the identity of your family? Years ago, we sat down as a family and we made a value statement.

[53 : 32] This is who we are. I'm not going to tell you to do this. It doesn't have to be something that's done in writing. Writing just makes it more visual.

For me, it makes it more concrete. But we made a value statement. At the top of the value statement, all it says, we are a family that. And everything after that was who we are.

And we would sit down once in a while and I would, we had it framed on the wall and I would take it down off the wall and say, okay, we're going to look at this. This is who we are. I want my children to understand this is who we are.

I want them to understand that they're a part of this. This is their identity. As part of the Turner family, this is the Turner family's identity. I brought it. I'm going to read it to you. It says, we are a family that looks like this.

Okay? This was not our idea. We stole it off the internet many years ago. But we are a family that puts God first in our lives. This is demonstrated by the respect we show for God, others, and ourselves.

[54 : 38] We realize that people are more important than things. Joshua 24, 15. As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Do you know how many times children would need admonished?

Because they were putting themselves first and we would take this down off the wall and say, what does that say? This is who we are. Is what you're doing aligning with that?

No, it's not. Okay, let's change that. Do you know how many times I probably need to go over and look at that list and be reminded of that very same thing?

We are a family that realizes our tongues are powerful. And should be used for good. We will not complain, but always strive to speak kindly and softly. When others are speaking, we will listen carefully.

James 3, 5. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts of great things. Behold, how great a matter, a little fire kindleth. We are a family that works together. I love this, Nathan. Works together and plays together.

[55 : 45] We are willing to help each other by being hardworking. 2 Thessalonians 3, 10. If any would not work, neither shall he eat. We are a family that has integrity.

This is a big one for me. We do the right thing when no one is looking. We see things that need to be done and do them without being asked. 1 Timothy 4, 12.

Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believer in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, and in purity. Number five. We are a family that is grateful and thankful to God for his blessing upon us, most importantly for the gift of salvation.

2 Corinthians 9, 15. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift. And number six. We are a family that is willing to help others and show the love of God by loving others as ourselves.

We do this by sharing the love of Christ, praying for each other and those outside our family, and by reaching out to those in need. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. Romans 1, 16.

[56 : 50] Listen. That is our identity. That is my family. That is my family's identity. And we remind ourselves of that frequently. I would challenge you.

What is your identity? Those two pillars that you need to build into your life if you want to raise your children in grace is protect that relationship at all costs.

And then have a long discussion about what your identity is. As a family. And establish that identity.

Live your life by that identity with the word of God as the foundation of that identity of who you are. Let's pray. Father, thank you for this morning. Thank you for the time that we've been able to spend in your word, Lord.

And I do pray for the families here, for the children here, for the moms and dads. Lord, none of us certainly are perfect. But, Lord, I am so thankful that we have your perfect word.

[57 : 58] Your inspired and errant word of God that we can study. And, Lord, I am thankful for the grace of God that teaches us as parents how to raise our children.

And teaches our children how they should live in this present world. May we seek to live our lives being continuously raised in grace.

It's in your son's name I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.