

Panel Discussion

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[0 : 00] Kids ever like bicker or fight sometimes, maybe a little bit of strife. That's not fair. He did this. She did that. Yes.

I was going to say no. You're going to say no. And then Paul called me a liar. So what are the kinds of just practical things that we can do?

Really, what should our goal be? The goal that we have, and we tell our kids this, is that they should be best friends with each other. That's right. And for a lot of people, a lot of families, siblings can't stand each other.

They're annoying, and I don't like to be around. My little brother, my little sister, my big brother, whatever it is. And I want to play with my other friends, not you. And we don't want to see that in our family. We want to see them be friends with each other, even if there's an age gap, right?

It's harder when there's an age gap, isn't it? And so what are some just practical thoughts on what you can do to foster that kind of thing in your home? Well, we are a family that works together and plays together.

[1 : 08] So for not wanting to give, you know, a to-do list of this is the way you do it, but things that we've done, we raise rabbits and chickens, and we have dogs and all kinds of stuff at our house.

And so they are paired up older with younger, and they go and do those things together. So they have to work together because there's things that sometimes the little ones can't do that the older ones can.

And so that gives them time to bond and be together. Besides just doing things together as a family on a regular basis.

But I will say there are times when there is bickering and they're not happy with one another. And, you know, sometimes you do have to separate and give them time to process.

You know, some alone time is always a good thing. But I actually like to go the other way with it. Most of my kids have been duct taped together at one time or another. Brutal!

[2 : 24] Well, I don't do skin to, like, I don't, like, put it on their skin. But there have been times, my older kids, I know Elise and Ethan one time were just going at it, just ready to tear each other apart.

And I went and got the duct tape, didn't get upset. I just duct taped them together and said, you're going to stay that way until you learn to get along. And they spent probably about an hour together, but it lasted about 30 seconds and they were best friends again.

You know, they just, they had all kinds of things to do for an hour. And then you get requests, can you duct tape us together? No, we save that for punishment.

Well, things have changed. Before I was born, one of my brothers and my sister used to, like, run away from home.

And my mother used barbed wire to keep them on the porch. She did. At least that's what I was told. I wasn't around yet. But that's what they told me.

[3 : 27] I never ran away from home either. You came along with what you wanted to do. Yeah. So things have gotten easier. Are they farmers? But... Were they farmers? Yeah. We had plenty of barbed wire. But actually, our kids are all grown and, you know, so some of them made other friends and so forth.

But I think for us, we emphasized music. I think just the music aspect was helpful. And it was kind of interesting to see different ones would kind of pair up and be friends for a while.

And then they'd kind of regroup. And then there'd be a different pair that would be friends. And that's kind of fun to watch. And I think it's good to just be aware of that and encourage them to, you know, if there's several children, to be friends with everybody eventually.

You know? Kind of work their way around. And so I think that's a good recommendation. Oh, yeah. In Colossians chapter 2, verse 2, it says this.

It says that their hearts may be encouraged being knit together in love. I mean, that's what we're after. And it's fascinating because where we live on the south side of Indianapolis, I'm sure you do similarly in your neck of the woods.

[4 : 42] You drive past some of these massive houses that people live in. And where, as a man, you know, my mind goes, it's like, what does that guy do for a living? You're just like, wow.

And also, you know, as a husband and father, I'm thinking, like, how many people live in that house? And I'm sure you're very familiar. A lot of times it's just two, maybe three, four, if that. And so one of the most practical ways that families can even just make ends meet in a work-a-day world is to downsize. And practically what that means as far as family solidarity, because with a family of eight, it's interesting because I think there was, you know, somebody, you know, in the family had mentioned something about, you know, our house in comparison to, you know, others in our family.

As far as like, oh, you know, Tim and Lori and their family of eight, they can fit in their little house. You know, it's, I mean, how many, what's our square footage? You know, 1,800. So it's really not that small.

But the practical dynamic behind it is sharing bedrooms. Siblings sharing bedrooms with one another rather than having your own enclave with me, myself, and I.

[6 : 01] And, you know, all your own devices and screens in your abode. And that's just a recipe for, well, not having hearts being knit together in love.

So sharing bedrooms is a very practical way to do so. That's great. My best friend in the whole world is my brother, my twin brother. And we shared a bedroom. You're trying to get me in trouble. Which, sorry, just by the way, a quick announcement. I became a grandfather three days ago. Woo! Woo! If any of you are wondering why my wife is not here, she's out helping them with a new baby. So, out in Columbus. So, anyway, just FYI. But, yeah, thanks for trying to get me in trouble there. Your brother. My brother, yes.

But we shared a room together all growing up. There was one year we moved. My dad, he was in the military, went to military college for one year. And I got my own room that year. We lived in a larger house.

[7 : 05] We had enough bedrooms. And at the end of it, I was like, well, because for a lot of those years, I was like, oh, I wish I had my own bedroom. And it wasn't really what it was cracked up to be. And so, yeah, I think that's great.

We do the same thing. We put the boys in one room and the girls in another. And they have to work together. And they spend a lot more time together with those types of things. The other thing, just to add, and then we'll go on to the next question, is, you know, when the kids fight, I just let them know, you know what, that's not allowed.

Right. And, you know, it's just surprising how many parents just let strife happen. Right. It's like, no, that's not allowed in our house. You need to figure it out.

You need to reconcile and stop what you're doing. It's just not allowed. So, let's move on to the next question. Anything from the audience, I'll give just a few seconds, one or two moments of awkward silence.

I love it.

[8 : 25] So, you, yeah, you, you wear it around the house. Yeah, along with the barbed wire and duct tape. Yeah. Yes. You might want to start with a T-shirt. Yeah, right, right.

Duct tape. Yeah, duct tape. Oh, let's see. What did I have?

One of the things, you know, it's important to make little corrections in how you're doing your family. And, again, this is, when we talk about family, it's not just parents and children.

Sometimes it's just mom and dad or just husband and wife, right, whether, you know, you haven't been able to have kids or you, the kids are out of the house, right, you're empty nesters.

And so family is, can look different based on seasons of life and all kinds of things. But to look to make adjustments to how to make things better, how to make things healthier, how to thrive more as a family.

[9 : 23] And so you need some kind of feedback loop. It's like a thermometer and a thermostat, right? You kind of feel the temperature and then you make the adjustment to the thermostat. It

needs to be cooler or warmer. And so what I look for as a, as what's that, what's that feedback loop?

What is going to tell me, are we doing okay? And the one thing that I look at, and I'll get, see what you guys think, is joy. Do we, are we enjoying each other as a family on a regular basis?

Am I enjoying my kids right now? Are my kids enjoying me, their parents? Are the kids, are they enjoying each other? Do we have a joyful home, you know, regularly?

Obviously, there's always going to be little spits and spats and things that, you know, need addressed. But as a general rule, how are things going? And I take an assessment of our family, is the joy there?

And if it's not, okay, we need to maybe make some adjustments and do some things differently. So any other thoughts on kind of that? Kind of what are some things you look for for, you know, making changes, making adjustments?

[10 : 31] As far as joy is concerned, you know, a barometer or the thermostat or however you described it as just the simplicity of, okay.

You know, and our, you know, our habit is, as far as our evening meal, you know, that's when we normally have our family worship time. And to be honest, I must confess, it's, we don't always feel joyful when, and we don't feel like, hey, we're going to sing praises to the Lord during family worship time.

And so, and that's where it's like, okay, you look in the book of Psalms, many of the psalmists understood that life hurts really bad. And that, you know, biblical joy is not just some type of subjective feeling of happiness, you know, as it were, it's just, it's fleeting.

But one of the challenges is living our lives by faith, total dependency upon the Lord, and praising Him even when we don't feel like it.

And therefore, leading our hearts in truth, and that incidentally lends itself toward lifting our hearts in joy and praise to the Lord. I mean, easy preaching, hard living, but just, you know, just an honest confession.

[11 : 48] But also, sometimes it might just be a practical thing as far as like, hey, let's clean up the supper dishes first before we segue into family worship.

You know, we need to clear the air, or whatever. Or just, sometimes it's just even, it's like, hey, just things need to look different tonight. Let's literally, there was a time last week, you know, we held hands together in prayer.

You know, we don't normally do that, but, you know, and it's just, it's one of those things where, it's like, you know, we're going to, that lends itself toward knitting hearts together in love, and, you know, physically holding hands together.

We're going to pray, because Ephesians 6 is real, as far as spiritual warfare. And you ever wonder, like, okay, why are we lacking joy, or what's going on?

You're at each other, it's like, well, the fiery darts of the wicked one are looking to wreak havoc upon our lives. So, anyway. When we have these conferences, we often talk about plans for the future, and the goals, and the outcomes we're looking for, and all of that.

[12 : 57] Sometimes we kind of look back at, you know, how things have been. We don't want to be encumbered by the things that have been, right? And so, you guys don't watch TV very much, do you?

Not into politics. But I asked my dad before he passed away, probably a couple years before he passed away. He was in his early 80s.

And I said, Dad, you know, you've been young, now you're old. What's the best time of life? You know, I'm just kind of curious. And he thought about it for a little while.

And he said, the best time is always right now. And I thought, wow, that's not only wisdom. That is wisdom from a man who is at peace with God.

He's at peace with himself. He doesn't have regrets. And even as he's in his 80s and health is fleeting, it's still the best time.

[14 : 03] It's still the best time of life. And I think we need to realize that, you know, that we need to recognize that every breath is precious and important.

And make the most of it. Don't be dwelling on that past, forgetting those things that are behind. Even your successes, you know. Let's live right now.

And what's God have for us right now? And let's do it. And if that doesn't bring you joy, I don't know what will. I don't know if it's the barometer or not.

But the thing that I always, when I look at my family and I see struggles or the joy is not there, the first thing I look at is what are we doing with our time?

Yeah. I think as parents, we have to be such keepers of time. And by that, I mean, you know, if your kids are at each other, if the joy isn't there, is it because we've been working too hard?

[15:09] You know, is there too much that we're pushing to get done? And especially young kids. I mean, young kids can be your greatest asset in getting jobs done.

At the same time, kids need time to be kids. And that doesn't mean I need to organize time for them. That means just let them run. Let them have that play time.

Let them relax. Sometimes with school, you know, they could be going really hard at lessons and learning. And they start getting snippy with one another.

And it's like, you know, we just need to put everything aside and just have some time just to freewheel for a little bit. But at the same time, keepers of time from the standpoint of needing rest. You know, sometimes you can be so busy working or even so busy just playing that everybody just needs to go to bed. You know, kids don't go to bed because they're tired.

[16:16] They go to bed because their parents are tired. Just, you know, public service announcement on that. And then they get older and they're able to stay up on their own. And they can stay up and I'm going to bed.

So, but, you know, and then I think at the same time in all of that, just making sure you're not overscheduled.

Like you talked about last night, you know, building in those times where there's just nothing. You know, you learn a lot about who you are when you've got nothing set in stone.

This has to be done. You learn a lot about who you are as a family when you can just be, just exist. And so I would say time is the thing that I like to watch, see what we're doing with our time, where we can cut things out or build things in or, yeah.

Yeah, a lot of times we're looking for, you know, to provide as many amazing experiences for our kids as we can. And sometimes that's just too much.

[17:29] I mean, you know, there's nothing wrong with that, obviously. But building in that margin so that you can just have, because you build a life on those just regular habits at home. So, not those one-off experiences.

So, anything else from the audience here? David, quick. The mic runner. He's the mic runner, not the mic turner owner.

There you go. All right. I got it. Just got to eat it. So, in a lot of the churches we go to, there are not always a lot of children and maybe more gray hairs, things like that.

And so, I guess my question is, do you have any practical biblical advice as far as people who are not necessarily in a mom, dad, younger kids that they're raising?

You know, advice for grandparents as far as being proactive or even, you know, single people. Just how to invest in this family idea.

[18:52] Are you asking, like, in a church that doesn't have children? Well, because sometimes, you know, like, okay, we have a family conference and it's at a church where it's all older people. Maybe they don't feel like we need that.

Yeah. We don't. You're just looking for instruction for, like, grandparents. Yes. People, yeah. Giving them a goal or a vision for what is their role. You know, one of the needs of, you know, Joe might be the best, you know, one to speak to this.

But one of the things that I've really enjoyed over the years is every once in a while we'll do a family reunion. Right? My parents, their kids are out of the house and have their own families.

And a lot of times when that happens, people move further away, sometimes many hours away. And, you know, mom and dad, grandma and grandpa can kind of spearhead organizing those family reunions where we get together.

And whether it's once a year or maybe once every five years because, you know, you're all over the world or something, doing things like that to get the family back together. What a tremendous opportunity to continue to connect as a family even through multiple generations.

[19:54] So just one thought and one idea. Give me that, Sonny. Okay? Get off my lawn. How many remember Pastor Floyd Baker?

Okay. His last church was Evansville, Indiana. But when was it he went to Florida? He moved to Florida for about five years in there. And we all thought he had retired. No, he moved to be near his grandchildren and to make sure that every one of them was saved. And when he was satisfied that they were all saved, he went back and took up a pastorate again. And I just thought, what a wonderful commitment, you know, of a grandfather who went to great lengths to make sure that his grandchildren were going to get to heaven. Now, we know that's the parents' responsibility. That's, you know, but he just wanted to make sure. And the Bible does say, teach these to your children and your children's children. That's right. And we're blessed in that 20 of our 26 grandchildren are within, like, three miles of us. [21 : 15] And so what we do is, on Wednesday night, we do the Wednesday night Bible time. Of course, we've got kids in our church. But I do my Bible Institute course.

And Linda takes the littler ones and goes and does a Bible lesson with them. And I'll tell you, honestly, I mean, I've pastored churches up to 200 people. And we have the best turnout on Wednesday night than I've ever had in any church I've ever been in. It's mostly our family, but that's okay. They're worth it. And we do get a few stragglers once in a while outside of the family. But anyway, I just see that. And I would say this to parents that have the children. Let grandma and grandpa minister to your kids.

You know, let them do that. And make those times available so that they can do their biblical responsibility of teaching the children and the children's children. [22 : 18] And allow them to do that. So there's a word for the younger ones. Are you done, sir? I actually, to your question, you know, the church is full of, you know, my brother-in-law calls them cue balls and cue tips.

Cue balls or, you know, no hair, cue tips. Anyway, you get it. So what do you do in a situation like that? And, you know, I completely agree.

For our families, we need to minister to our families. But I think the church is missing something today. Something is off.

Joe, I know you'll know who said this. Yesterday I was list traveling and I heard a guy on the radio or online. This is what he said.

He said, we need to decide if we are the church or if we are corporations with Bible verses. Which is what I have been saying for like months and months and months and months and months. But he said it so more eloquently than I did.

[23 : 19] And that's a problem that I see in Christianity. That's a problem I see in grace churches today. That we have reduced ourselves to corporations with Bible verses.

And we need to realize what we need to help people realize, old people. What we need, churches that are just elderly.

Churches that are dying or dead and just don't know it yet. Because it's just old people waiting to go to glory. What we need to realize is we are not corporations with Bible.

God never ordained corporations with Bible verses. He ordained the church. You are the church. This is a building. You are the church. I am the church.

We are the church. Our family is the church. When you get together on Wednesday nights, yeah, it's your family. So what? That's the church. That's the body of Christ. And we need, all of us, to invest in the lost.

[24 : 25] Invest in reaching the lost. And so, you know, you go into a church and you have a family platform that you're presenting and it's all older people.

Well, older people are not disconnected from society. As much as we try and disconnect them from society, they're not. And they all have neighbors and children.

You jokingly said, get off my lawn, right? I think there's great value in the church, in the more experienced members of the body of Christ investing in neighbors, investing in children.

Because, listen, every one of us has neighbors who are lost, whose families are broken, who are growing up in a culture that is teaching everything that is anti-biblical values, anti-God.

And what an opportunity to be the grandparents to the kids across the fence. What an opportunity. And to purposefully go after them as a grandfather and a grandmother, teaching them, you know, biblical values just by how you treat them, by how you interact with them, by how you desire to get to know them.

[25 : 47] And they're going to, I would imagine they're going to think you're either some kooky old couple, or, you know, you're just, you don't have anybody that cares for you. So we're going to be the young people that are going to be nice to these old people across the way.

I don't care what they think of us. You know, when I get to be old, I'm going to be the old guy that, you know, goes after the kids in the neighborhood wherever I come across kids to interact with them because they need Christ.

Just like our kids need to see Christ, just like our grandkids need to see Christ, our neighbors, those kids, they need to see Christ. I think a big part of why the church is anesthetized today is because we've accepted this narrative that this is like a building is where church things take place versus just being a saved member of the body of Christ, serving and ministering to everybody that we come in contact with, including children.

If we want to see the church come back to life today, we need to be the body of Christ out there, not here. Appreciate that.

Just like you heard Paul this morning share about their ministry, along with Lori and I and Grace Family Ministries, and Joel, you and your family, when your kids were younger, you did similarly, not altogether different from what you and Linda are still doing, but at least three of us have the opportunity of doing ministry at churches all over the country.

[27 : 35] And it's very sobering. Yet having said that, it provides also a tremendous opportunity for families like yours and ours to press in and be a catalyst toward positive change.

Because there are churches all over the country. Literally, they would fall all over themselves. You don't have to twist their arm in any way, shape, or form. They would love to have a family like any of yours or ours at their church.

And so even if it's just showing up, as far as if you, you know, where I think of as a man, husband, father, ministry leader, you know, pastor, just like, hey, as a young man, you know, we've communicated with our sons.

We have four of them. And, okay, we have two daughters. And so, you know, as, and what a great opportunity to mentor young men as they start coming around, right, as our girls come of age. So point being is that if, as a man, we've communicated with our sons that you can anticipate teaching and preaching the word of God in some way, shape, or form in your local church, whether or not you're the pastor.

[28 : 46] So the point being what I'm trying to say is that, is that if you can put two sentences together as a man, and if you can read a passage of scripture, maybe sing a song or just do something, you can make a difference for the cause of Christ at churches in your community, in your region, in your area, just showing up and being a blessing.

And, I mean, I think it's not necessarily entrepreneurial, but, I mean, there are churches that are literally, that they would love to have young people that they can invest in or just, it's opportunities to serve.

And I think about it as even just, as I've talked about with, you know, we've talked about with some of our sons, it's like, hey, you could be affiliate missionaries with Grace Family Ministries. I mean, just opportunities to serve, to minister.

I know, Joel, you had shared when you were in Bible Institute, you did similarly, you know, as well as I myself. And so I just share that with you, because when we see needs, be a catalyst toward positive change.

Any Tom Decker-Herry can moan, groan, gripe, or complain about what's wrong. But it takes wisdom, vision, and courage to press in and make a difference. And so one of the things that we encourage and endeavor to equip churches to do is to, hey, call it robust theology of the family.

[30 : 08] 150 years ago, it was implicitly understood. But increasingly, in our modern day and age, it's not. And so basically, bringing practical words of exhortation from the word of God should not be just some, like, okay, we're in Ephesians chapter 5, we're going to talk about marriage now.

You know, it's like, no, it should be at the forefront of the hearts and minds of pastors and ministry leaders. But unfortunately, because of institutionalized education, even most pastors today have been educated by the government for most of their life.

They're indoctrinated into this idea of outsourcing everything. You know, in other words, don't try this at home. Leave it to the trained professionals. I think that gets into what you were talking about, Paul, as far as the institutionalized regime of, you know, church ink, as it were.

But, and that's where the church, as far as, hey, being proactive at strengthening hearth and home with tools to co-champion the next generation.

So anyway, that was a whole lot, but I pray that makes sense. Any, I guess, go back to the audience. Anything else? I've got a couple, a few other things here queued up.

[31 : 25] We'll give just a moment. Okay, down here. There we go.

Okay. From, Paul, from your message this morning, it just really stuck out with me. Basically, the call to men, right, not to provoke our children, you know, and that it really leads to discouragement. I think that one of your points was identity, and I've been thinking really over the last few months, but maybe it's something you guys could maybe touch on, some ways to do it. But, and I like your analogy of, like, the last stop on the train, right?

And sometimes it needs to be sooner, but, you know, that's not the only thing. And rules without relationship equal rebellion, right?

And I've heard that phrase that really stuck out with me. How can we work more on the nurturing side to give our kids identity, right? So we think about it as a Christian, the freedom, I guess just the peace inside that comes from our identity in Christ.

[32 : 39] And I think what kids need so much more that we miss, and so I'm thinking of myself, if we go to the last stop on the train, whether it's the split, whether it's just consequences and all these things, we miss that nurturing, we miss the identity, and that hit me this morning just thinking about it.

These kids are discouraging it, because in their minds, who they think of themselves and their identities, all of a sudden they're wrong, right? Or in all the ways that they don't please us or whatever.

So what are maybe some things that come to mind if you think about how to do your kids a strong, I guess, identity and reinforcement rather than just one for the consequences?

It's one of those things where I know it's in everybody, in every Christian family's mind, not losing their kids, right? Yeah. You hear that so often, and I just feel like it goes, when you're talking about the checklist versus the relationships.

Well, I think one of the obvious is to have the right ratio of words of praise versus correction. And it needs to be, what, a thousand to one or something like that, you know?

[33 : 51] I don't know what it is. I made that up. But that's probably, you know, catch them doing something good. That's right. You know? And then say something.

Yeah. You know? We hear this in society. If you see something, say something. You know, we're supposed to spy on each other now and all of that. Well, catch them doing something good and then praise them for that and give them that encouragement.

You know, the book of Proverbs, it says that pleasant words are like honeycomb, sweet to the soul and health to the bones. In other words, words of encouragement should be generous and they should be abounding, you know, in our homes.

You know, not, you know, just necessarily in the grand slam type of situation, but just, you know, normal. Normal. And, you know, just in all genuine sincerity. I appreciate what you mentioned, Paul, this morning as far as about, as far as how God communicates to us, you know, consistently in Scripture and how we should similarly be actively communicating words of truth and encouragement and praise to our kids.

Of course, all Scripture is given by inspiration. It's profitable for doctrine, correction, reproof, instruction of righteousness. You know, it's just, it's both and, not either or. It's a, you know, so it's just, and that's, I appreciate basically what you mentioned too, Joe, about rules without relationship results in rebellion.

[35 : 18] And so that's the issue. It's like elsewhere in Proverbs it says, my son, give me your heart and let your eyes observe my ways. And as far as that heart connection, and that's, that's a, that's an internal intangible dynamic that it's not something that we can engineer in, put together in the energy of the flesh.

And it can't, you know, it's not just some magic wand formula and just, okay, just kind of like you were saying the height, how to, but it takes time to build that.

And not just quality time, but if we're going to have quality time, it takes quantity time. And it's, it's worth it, you know, and otherwise, you know, it's something's got to give in our life.

And so you make time for what's important for you. Yeah. One thing I learned from my wife is that you need to communicate your love. You know, for me, I'm a dumb man, you know, she's like, do you love me?

It's like, yeah, I told you I loved you last week. And that turns out she wants to hear that every day. And, um, selfish. And I'm like, it should be, isn't it obvious that I love you?

[36 : 28] But I realized I have to do that with my kids too. And they're going to be less inclined to say that, dad, you know, to, to make that correction or ask, ask for it. And so, uh, over the years I've had to learn, okay, I need to communicate that love to my kids on a regular basis.

And, and just say things like, I am so glad that you are my son. Amen. Amen. Or I'm so glad that you are my daughter. That's right. Um, and...

For no good reason. I mean, really, for no good, like, not because they did something, but because it's, right. That was really helpful or whatever, yeah. But just because you're my son, just because you're my daughter. Um, yeah.

I'll, I'll, I'll, I'm going to go a different direction with this, but, but I'll tell a story first. Um, I remember watching one time, the guy was probably 19 years old, okay.

And I don't know if his father had ever said an encouraging word to him. Like, ever. And, uh, I was, I'm an emotional guy, so.

[37 : 30] Um, the, 19 years old, I mean, full-grown man. And I just happened to be standing there, and I, I knew the background, but I didn't know probably the severity of the background.

I probably should have, but I didn't. And I remember this 19-year-old guy just, we were standing outside, and I remember him saying something, and he just, he was, like, desperate.

I mean, you, you could, you could hear it in his voice. You could see it in the way he was talking to his father. He just, he just wanted affirmation. And at 19 years old, his, he still hadn't got it, and in that moment, he didn't get it.

And his dad's made some rude, joking comment, and you could just watch this guy's shoulders drop, and you could watch him turn around, walk away. And, uh, I think we need to be careful to affirm our children.

You know, like, to balance, right? You know, 1,000 to 1, that's a good, I like that statistic, that's good, even if you just did make it up. Yeah, but, uh, we, we do need to, you know, how, how does God treat us?

[38 : 42] This, this book is full of encouragement and kindness. Yeah, does it deal with correction? Absolutely. But there's a whole lot of things in here where we're reminded, I mean, how many times have you seen it posted?

It says 365 times in the Bible, not to be afraid. Why? Because we need to remind it every day, not to be afraid. I mean, there's truth in that. And so, just the idea of being an encouragement, but, but I think the thing, I don't want you or any of us to put the cart before the horse.

We're talking about raising children in grace, but, and I think you started to hit on it, it, it starts with us being raised in grace.

And the only way for, I can't raise my children in grace if I'm not spending time with God and his word, being raised in grace by him. And listen, I know sometimes this is hard for, I think sometimes, I'm going to be critical for a minute, sometimes as grace believers, we get so dialed in on our positional truth.

It's important. It's foundational. Not going to deny it. Need to study it. Need to understand it. Need to wrap our brains around it. But when we look at passages of scripture, we can't see what else is being taught in there because all we can see is, hey, we're looking for the rapture, not the second coming.

[40 : 04] And I think there's great truth to pull out of those same passages in, think about that. Because we're looking for the rapture and not the second coming, what do we have? Hope.

What do we need to teach our children? Hope. How do we give our children hope? You know, in how we treat them and how we give them security, how we give them all of these things.

And so raising our children, before we can raise our children, we have to make sure that God is raising us. And that's a daily, daily thing that takes place in our lives.

But just back to Joel's point about the thousand to one, like there are seasons in life where there is a lot of discipline. Sure. And, you know, for an individual child, let's say, right, where you're just constantly, hey, we have to work through this.

And I try to look for extra opportunities for when things are going well and to say those things because there's a lot of correction going on.

[41 : 14] That thousand to one thing. I hereby, I hereby, this moment, copyright, one thousand to one. Yeah. If I live long enough, there'll be a book.

Okay. That's good. So can we pivot off this a little bit, still on kind of Joe's topic here, talking about men, fathers not exacerbating their children.

What's the, what's the, how's it go? What's the, what's the passage? Provoke your children.

Provoke your children. Provoke your children to wrath. That's easy to do. And I emblazoned in my memory.

Sometimes I wish I could forget, but it's probably important that I don't. I can remember more times than I would like to admit, times where I lost it. I said something I shouldn't. I was too aggressive.

And, you know, I think one of the things, one of the important things to do is be willing to say, you know what, kids, dad screwed up. Right. I shouldn't have said it that way.

[42 : 14] I shouldn't have done this. I shouldn't have lost it. And will you forgive me? I need you to forgive me because I didn't do what I should have done. But the other thing is, is that, you know, you know, unless you're a single dad, you have a wife.

And you know what? I find that there's a lot of things that my wife is good at that I'm less good at. That'd be bad. Yeah. Other people do bad things.

I'm just less good at things. Yeah. But to really lean into the things that she's good at. And, you know, this is why husbands and wives are such this great idea that God had, right?

That we compliment one another. And there's things that I'm good at that she's not as good at and vice versa. And when it comes to relationships, I mean, this is like, you know, it's obvious, I think, to everyone.

Women tend to be better at relationships. And so I can learn things from her and go to her and say, you know what? Was I too harsh there? And she'll look back and she'll say, yeah.

[43 : 23] It's like, okay. And sometimes, I don't ask the question, but she takes the courage to say, you know what? I think you were too harsh. And I have to probably spend an hour or two humbling myself, giving me enough time to humble myself to admit, yeah, you're probably right.

So anything else to say on that? You know, those times of, call it tough love, tough love, they can be effective when they're rooted in, like Joe said, as far as just a relationship.

And so, and listen, I mean, my wife is tough. And so it's fascinating because times that, you know, and she needs to really press into, you know, one of our kids, but it's precious though to see not too long after that, just like, hey, there's tenderness, there's warmth and depth of relationship.

And therefore, in those times of tough love, it hits home for the kid because, hey, they know that mom and that situation is devoted. And of course, it's not just her, you know, alone, but it's her and I together.

And so she's very helpful to provide an insight for me if I'm, you know, kind of like you mentioned, brother, as far as like, you know, if I'm being overly harsh and these types of things, but that's where, once again, in fact, there was a time, I believe it was earlier this summer that, you know, I was reading a book that you gave me, brother, and there was an especially poignant section that the Lord used to convict my heart, and I actually shared that with my family as a part of confession and asking their forgiveness for, hey, you know, I'm in a funk right now.

[45 : 14] I'm just not, and it was, it was, it was certainly a precious time. And I just pray that it just lent itself toward, hey, you know, a lesson to, you know, all of our kids as far as like, wow, you know, how to, you know, resolve conflict or clear the air or just apologize, you know, as a man.

I'll reserve comments until 1030 tomorrow morning. Okay. Anything else from folks out there?

Yeah, in the back. I'm going to go back a bit. You were talking about churches with a lot of senior citizens and how do they, you know, play out in the Grace Church and you mentioned doing things in the neighborhood, not just doing things in the church.

And our church has a program where there's a school, local public school, where you can sign up and be a mentor. And I've heard so many good things about that because in conjunction with the seniors needing to minister, there are young people that have never heard good things about their life and about themselves.

And they may never get that chance, but we as Christians and as people in the community can go out and this is a one hour a week time, but it made all the difference in the world for a lot of the kids

that have this school year for a full year during school time meet up with someone that unconditionally loved them.

[46 : 51] And a lot of people may not have that in their home life. And this is one way we can do it. And the other thing is why can't we start these things with homeschoolers?

We think homeschoolers have the perfect family and the perfect life and they don't need grandparents or older people to be mentors to them. But I tell you, you'll be surprised. There's probably a lot of young people that would love having someone to talk to that they didn't feel there was any pressure. So I think these are some of the things that we can do in churches whether you're older or younger.

I know when you have large families it's hard to set aside time outside the family to minister because you've got your hands full ministering in your home. But the seniors who have grandkids that don't live nearby, it's a perfect time in their life to maybe just spend an hour a week ministering to someone else's children.

That's your mom, Nathan, huh? Now for five years when our kids were younger we were ministering at the time at a church in a rural agricultural community 25 miles from Walmart.

[48 : 03] I mean, we were out in the sticks although we were in town. But we did a good news club through Child of Vandalism Fellowship at the elementary school.

And was it always a convenient thing to do in the middle of the afternoon, midweek? No, but it was just one of those things just, hey, leading your heart in truth. Hey, this is a great opportunity to minister.

You know, I mean, basically take it to them. In fact, one of the reading specialists or whatever on staff there, she said, I like it when you are here. It's a good vibe.

She said, you know, I'm thinking, hey, that's a Holy Spirit, you know, as far as just, you know, the presence of God. But whatever the case. And so regardless of your season of life, but especially if you're older, as far as, hey, just feeling like, hey, how can I serve?

Maybe my grandkids are in a different state or whatever. Yeah, just as far as there's opportunities left and right in front of you, behind you. And so I'm grateful for Child of Vandalism Fellowship and the Good News Club or the Summertime five-day clubs and, you know, these types of things.

[49 : 07] And just all kinds of opportunities in the communities where we live. Yeah. Okay. I think we're going to do, Joe, just maybe five more minutes. So anything else out here?

Otherwise, I can. Where at? Okay. Okay. Where's, right up here? Yeah, I was just curious as we talk about the family, what is some of the things you guys have done over the years?

Maybe your kids, different age ranges for hospitality. I know as we talk about our wives, that's one of the things my wife is good at is having families over, getting to know families more intimately, but not only just families, you know, having elderly people over, young teens, transitioning, you know, at that time.

So just kind of curious what that looks like in your home. We did one, I don't know if we did it a whole lot, but when we were out in the Black Hills, started a church out at Rockerville.

We had, I've got some relatives that live out there and they always lived far away from us and so we never really got to know them very well and so we invited them over and we had the kids, Linda prepared the basic meal, but each of the kids got to make a unique dessert and that just really impressed my cousin and you'd have to know, Ken, but we had a really good time and then lately we've been going out there and having some...