

Mentoring Grandchildren & Young Families - 2023

Ohio Grace Family Conference

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[0 : 00] Let's have a word of prayer. Our dear Heavenly Father, we thank you, Lord, for the wonderful grace that you have, and we thank you for being reached by your grace through the work of redemption of your Son, Jesus Christ.

Lord, we know very well that you have a chosen people and you had a wonderful and special program with your people, Israel, through basically the whole Bible.

And we thank you that at the right time you sent your Son, Jesus Christ, to die for our sins. And he was not only coming for Israel, but he also was coming to bless all the other nations in which we were included.

So now we thank you, Lord, for being able to be here, rejoicing in our hearts with the peace we have through the blood that was shed at the cross, that was able to pay and annihilate completely our guilt, our troubled hearts and giving us so much peace.

And together with this wonderful blessing, we became blessed with the honored position of adopted sons.

[1 : 49] and we are now enjoying together with Israel and any people that believes in you, we are together in one body, the body of your Son, Jesus Christ.

We thank you, Lord, for being part of this wonderful blessing. Also, thank you, Lord, for the family that you gave to us, for each one of our sons, each one of our kids that are today rejoicing with us in this hope.

We thank you, Lord, for this congregation and for all the brothers and sisters spread all over the world that has been joining us together in this beautiful hope of being in heaven with you sooner or later.

Thank you, Lord, for giving us so much. now we pray that this message may challenge us to see the importance of our role as we are here to serve you and to glorify your name.

In Christ Jesus' name, we give you thanks and pray. Amen. Mentoring grandchildren and young families. This was the title that was given to me and I felt a little uncomfortable at the beginning because I'm not really ready to become a, to be a grandpa.

[3 : 28] You know, I always think about grandpa as somebody that stay around with the kids and doing nothing all day long and walking around and we're still so busy in our ministry that I don't feel like, you know, going that slow.

But I do understand that is a wonderful and a special ministry that the Lord gave to all of us as we approach that age when we see our own children having children.

and I like to start reading Titus 2. Titus chapter 2 verse starting with verse 1 all the way to verse 8.

But as for you speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine that the older man be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience, the older woman likewise that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not giving too much wine, teachers of good things, that they admonish the young woman to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husband, that the word of God may not be blessed.

Likewise, exhort the young man to be sober-minded in all things, showing yourselves to be a pattern of good works, in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.

[5 : 32] So with this passage that we start here, we understand how much God is worried about each generation, you know, each aspect, children, young, adult, and older people, and elderly women, and each one of us in its time have a special place in the body of Christ, and we understand that God, He intended us to be part of His blessings.

We are created to serve God in the first place. so I do like to approach different people in Brazil depending on what level they are.

And if I approach the people from my own former religion, the Roman Catholic Church, I like to use a method of evangelism that I call ingredients without recipe method.

and I really love to use the ingredients that they have to build a recipe and lead them to the understanding of the work of redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At the same time, if you deal just like Paul did with the Jews and Gentiles, we want to see first what they believe to start what they have and build something and lead them to see the light.

[7 : 28] I like to tell you too that when I approach unbelievers, I mean people they call themselves atheists sometimes or they say they don't have a religion.

Then we have to start from the beginning and I like to use a different method of evangelism that I call creator-creation relationship. The creator-creation relationship is when we start from the beginning and you'll talk about the creator and you'll talk about the man as an inventor making his things and the relation between man and the things he invented and how similar is that to the relation between the creator to our creation.

So everything that man has ever invented is invented to serve him for some purpose. Right? The same thing. God made us to serve him.

So we are here to serve God anyway. And if you're going to be serving God as a good vessel or not so good one, you're going to be serving him.

And if you're not going to be serving as a good example, you're going to be referred to as a bad one. So let's make a good choice. So anyway, here we have people that we all make choices in our lives.

[8 : 57] And I like to start with a testimony of Jonathan Edwards. There was a Puritan preacher in the 1700s, a respected preacher.

He attended Yale at the age of 13. Later he became the president of Princeton College. He married Sarah in 1727 and they were blessed with 11 children.

There is one family here that they have 10 and they're going to be 11, right? Where are they? So interesting that we see still there are families with many children today and we like to think about this testimony here.

Jonathan and his wife Sarah passed on a great godly legacy to their 11 children. children. And another man, an American educator, he dedicated a lot of time to trace the descendants of Jonathan Edwards almost 150 years after his death.

And interesting that from all those descendants, 13 of those became college presidents, 65 became college professors, 75 military officers, 80 became public servants, people working in the public service, 60 of them were authors of books and many other things, 60 of them were doctors, 30 of them judges, 100 pastors, 100 lawyers, and 3 of them were US senators, and 1 came to be a vice president.

[11 : 10] 285 of them were college graduates. And this is only in 150 years after the life of Jonathan Edwards.

At the same time, it caught attention to a man, there was a sociologist, Richard Dugdale, in 1877, he started studying, there was, he found out that there was 42 people from the different prisons, they were traced to one man, and his name was Max Jukes, and Max Jukes, he married not a very nice lady, but he had also a lot of kids, and because of the choices that he made in life, they were not really what we call really nice people.

Those are the people that we really want to share the gospel with them, you know, because they really, we all need it, but those people, and from that legacy, from studying the sociologist, studying the life of Max Jukes and his descendants, he found out that 310 died as paupers.

150 were criminals, convicted criminals, 7 of them murderers, 100 plus drunk people that involved in drinking and troubles from that way, 190 prostitutes from his line, 440 was physically wrecked by alcoholism and drugs.

And so we understand, we must make choices. And when we are blessed with the opportunity to hear the gospel, as I was when I was 21, my father-in-law, Carol's father, he went to Brazil as missionary and he was able, I was able to meet Carol because Carol went to school with one of my sisters.

[13 : 47] And I really became very, very interested in Carol. And if I show pictures of her at that age, you will understand why.

she still is beautiful. So I remember those days and the only thing that was occupying my mind was that girl.

I was dreaming about this girl. So I asked her to be my girlfriend and she didn't have an answer for me.

And she said that she would have to think about things. And she went back home and a week went by, no answer, another week and I became impatient.

So I went to meet her at the way out of school and I put her against the wall, you know, give me an answer.

[14 : 49] I wanted to know about this. So she tried to share the gospel with me, but I was not really that interested in that kind of conversation, but she ended up realizing that she didn't have that much of experience to deal with my kind of person.

And she decided to ask me to talk to her dad. And I understood that her dad, I should go there and ask her dad about dating her.

That's what I understood. So I went there one Saturday and of course we started talking and breaking the conversation and finally I found myself with the Bible in my hand and a couple hours later he really led me to understand many things that I never thought about the Bible.

I never read my Bible, I never read a Bible until to that day, so everything was strange to me, but very, very interesting.

And the way he introduced me to the gospel, I don't know how he did that at the time, but it did work. I really understood and I took a stand and I became very interested in going back to Carol's house for two reasons now, you know, and I became a Bible student with my father-in-law.

[16 : 24] So many years went by and as I became more acquainted with the word and the Bible and he was preaching the word in a very special way to teaching me the most important part of the Bible first, the letters of the Apostle Paul, and I became very involved in the church and started leading youth groups and on and on until 19, it was 1994, we became involved with work with TCM and then in 1986, we, we became part of the Word of Grace mission to go to Brazil to start churches in the ministry there.

So we thank you the Lord for everything he did, but over the years studying more about the scriptures and learning from other different sources, we were acquainted with a very important course that we took, it's called Growing Kids God's Way, that helped us, that was helping us start to help us grow our kids.

And then I started studying and I was already very much interested in those subjects of relationships, marriage relationships and things like that. And this come to a point that we develop a very good ministry toward families.

and then one of the very important things we understood that to become a good father you must be a good husband first place.

You got to be a good husband. And the Bible teach you one of the most important principles about this wonderful relationship.

[18 : 35] step. You can go to 1 Corinthians 7 and can go to many other places in the Bible. But if Ephesians, we call your attention there in Ephesians now, let's go to the book of Ephesians chapter 5.

And in Ephesians chapter 5, we see verse 25. Ephesians 5, 25, say, husbands, love your wives just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for her.

So as you start digging into this wonderful principle, you understand that you should die for your wife. I mean, you should love her so much that you are willing to die for her.

And it's so important that it's not just romanticism is actually decisions. Because loving someone is not just a feeling.

It's decisions that you make toward that person in order to, if you love God, you want to please God. You want to do the things the way God wants you to do.

[19 : 53] If you love God above everything else you want, that everything that you do, it's in harmony with the will of God.

Think about your wife now. If you, Christ loved the church, loved the church so much that he died for the church. Even before the church came to exist and the love of God was already there.

So he died for the church before she even exists. God tells us men to love our wives. And what is the woman that doesn't like to be loved like that?

Every wife will be willing to submit to become partners of this journey of a man when he loves her that much.

So this is the most important principle that we see here. In order to become a good father, you've got to be a good husband. And if you're interested in, once you, together with your wife, you start enjoying the, the fruit of the marriage, the children, you love those children too.

[21 : 22] And you're going to notice that you do have a very, very special ministry right there. So the Bible really teaches that your first ministry concerning your relationship with God and your family, your family is your first ministry.

So in a good wife, to be a good wife will prepare her to be a good mother.

When she, a good husband and a good wife, they do well in their relationship together with the Lord, growing in the Lord, and growing in the understanding of God's instructions about marriage and the relationship, that is what the kid needs the most.

Most of the time, the kids, actually the kids, they have a radar. You know, when they, they have a radar that watch their parents all the time.

They may be playing in the side room over there, but they are always watching what's going on in the house. And they will feel very insecure if their mom and dad start fighting or arguing things.

[22 : 57] So this is a very important principle that it will establish the directions for everything that has to do with parenting.

the loving relationship among men and women will become the greater incentivator for the growth of a child.

The children, they are not able to see God. so if you are applying God's principle in your life, that's what they are saying. They are watching. So you can tell your children everything you want, but they are watching what do you do, what your behavior.

So the same thing goes on. And so I would like to show, go to the second Timothy now. and there is an important principle here in second Timothy.

Chapter two, you may find kind of a strange approach, but watch this. Second Timothy chapter two, verse one. You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus and the things that you have heard from me among men and witnesses, commit this to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

[24 : 34] I didn't know that, but through the work that I was doing as a missionary in Brazil, leading people to the Lord, many, many of those opportunities.

I have my kids right there. They were watching. I remember I was talking to a man.

He was selling something on the street, and he stepped by, and he wants me to buy some stuff from him. I was not interested in that, but we started talking, and I noticed he was kind of really open to conversation, so I started sharing the gospel with him.

And my son, Paul, was right behind me. And Paul, he has been going on the guava trees over there in our yard, and he found a very nice, very, very nice guava.

And he picked up that guava, and he came around me, and he put his hand in my arm. You know, this is one of the things you learn in Growing Kids God's Way, the interruption rule.

[25 : 43] You should not interrupt the conversation of adults, so there they want to be respectful. So Paul came and put his hand in my arm, waiting for my, so I could be able to break the conversation, give him some, a little tension.

And then the man noticed that Paul put his hand in my arm, and I was talking to the man, and finally I said, well, will you excuse me? I need to know what my son needs here.

And I turned to Paul, and Paul, he was being there for over maybe 10 minutes now, waiting. And then I said, Paul, yes, what do you need?

And he said, oh, dad, I just want to give you this guava. It was the best one I found. I want to give it to you. And the man, what? And he started asking questions about things like this, and I was able to share the gospel with that man.

He was very happy to hear what he heard. And so those are little examples of the wonderful relationship and knowing that I didn't know I'm training my child by the way I'm doing things.

[26 : 57] Sharing the gospel, putting the importance of that message in our conversation all the time and every time, and they were always present. They were always present, sitting in the front row of our churches all the time.

you know, I took the whole front row with all those kids, but wonderful. They were always there. And we think they don't pay attention.

You know, sometimes I think they don't pay attention in the message. That's not true, because not to, I have to share that with you, because this is something very nice that happened.

Not too long ago, I was preaching in a church in Tijukas, and my grandson, Zach, Jason's boy, the oldest, he was there.

He was about 12, now he's 13, right? And he was sitting there in the back, and sometimes I kind of see him, and I noticed his eyes kind of looking.

[28 : 05] It seems like he was not there, you know. but, you know, children, sometimes we get listening to many things, and they get distracted, but okay.

But at the end of the service, two ladies from our churches, they start walking down to the pond very close to our house there, and they were talking about some difficult problems they were going through, and Zach asked them when they started walking that way, Zach asked, can I go with you?

And Zach went along with them all the way to the pond, and then, on the way back they were still talking, and then Zach stopped and said, did you hear what my, what Opa said, he calls me Opa, that's grandpa in German, did you hear what Opa said in the meeting this morning?

And the ladies look at him, said, what do you mean? You know, everything you're saying, Opa said this, and he said that, and he said that, and he went through the, you know, through the message, you know, point by point, and said, and this is applied exactly in your situation.

And those ladies look at him, hmm, okay, but, and then later they came and shared with me, they said, wow, this little boy was paying attention. It is amazing.

[29 : 37] So, this verse, looking for, searching for people that are able to, it starts in the beginning.

And no wonder most of my boys are willing to be involved in ministry today because this is what we have been doing in our lives.

This is, this is the most important subject of our conversation at home was related to church activity, to church, to reaching out with people, different ministries, going to prison, going to, to, uh, recoveries, yeah, rehab for drug addicted.

I have been part of so many of those programs and also receiving people from the street into my house and giving them a bedroom to sleep, taking care, feeding them in our house.

my boys saw all that happening and so they, they know what our life is. So, actually, I always pray that the Lord will give us people, yeah, I mean, faithful men that are committed that we could be trained.

[31 : 05] At the same time, I was training seven boys around me without even knowing. So, it's so important for us in our role as a parent to be aware of what's going on in your family and your testimony, your personal testimony, and their lives all the time.

So, let me share with you now about my story about grandpa. My, my parents came from Germany.

In 1953, they went down to Brazil, Brazil, and they decide to raise their kids down there. So, I never had any grandpa in my life.

I never met my, the father and mother of my dad or mom. Never met them. I never had any information.

Actually, back then, no cell phone, nothing like that. So, everything was just letters. My mom wrote to them, and I don't remember, and it's very little about writing a letter to my grandpa.

[32 : 22] I didn't know German, so I couldn't write a letter to them. So, it was just no communication at all. So, I never had the privilege to have a grandpa to be around.

And so, when I start to become a grandpa now, I said, I have not much experience in that field. but Carol did.

Carol did have her grandpa. Even both of them went to Brazil to visits there. So, I met them and then when we came here too. So, we understand the aspects of mentoring grandchildren today is still something that I'm working on.

But I understand the importance of there are certain duties that we have as grandpa that I can see when my children went to their grandpa.

Of course, my father was not a Bible believer in the way we are and he was not really much into this Bible things.

[33 : 38] But my father was a man, a good man, with a good testimony in town. He was very honest. He was not a man that I am proud of him in many, many ways.

But my kids, they did have a good relationship with Carol's parents, especially work. Especially because we're doing the missionaries, working with churches and everything.

So a lot of good identification. So one of the important things that we have to keep in mind is that let's say read in 2 Timothy 1, verse 13, it says, hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me and faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

That good things which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us. So this is a very important treasure that we have and we must reassure to our grandkids things about that.

We should not be afraid to talk with our grandkids about spiritual issues in spiritual life. And many times their parents now they're busy with life and doing so many things and as we visit our grandkids we can talk to them and share.

[35 : 16] And I remember Carol mentioned to me several times that she was glad to hear that about a good conversation she had with our grandkids, some of our grandkids, about salvation.

Not they didn't hear from their parents but she just was enjoying to talk about it and know that they know about salvation. And that's very nice.

But sometimes as parents we kind of fail and or maybe for some reason our kids don't get the message somehow and the grandparents have the privilege to in those kind of conversation to bring up the subject and clarify several points and make some important points and also concerning as the grandkids grow that's not exactly our case now because our oldest granddaughter she's about 13, 14.

This week Eva, George's oldest, she'll be 14. And then Zach is the next, right? And as they go to the teen years later they will start coming and facing the world in a different way.

and many times they develop a good relationship with their grandparents and they will come for counseling sometime, especially if the parents are not present at the time when they are involved in too much work and raising the family.

[37 : 01] And I remember when Paul was about 14, he would go to Rio Claro, that's about over, over like 600, 700 miles away to stay, spend time with my grandfather.

And he told us that he really likes that in that city they have a really nice swimming pool. And so we didn't have that kind of swimming pool where we were, but he liked going there because he likes to go to that big, nice swimming pool.

And, but he really liked also the good, wonderful cookies that grandma made. And I remember grandma, she was always very dedicated to kids, to our kids, and a sense of sitting them on the sofa and the living room and talking with them before their afternoon nap and talking about the Lord and things like that.

that. That was, I have that in my mind very clear. And Paul, he did start his studies in the Bible more deeply with my father-in-law those years.

And I remember later on he said that his desire to serve the Lord has a lot to do with grandpa. Oh, that's wonderful.

[38 : 32] So, and then he also, Paul also mentioned another day, I was talking to him about grandpa and he mentioned about the many letters that grandpa wrote him concerning Bible issues and clarification of things.

So those are great opportunities that we as grandparents can dedicate time to help our kids or even other families.

I have here in my pocket a picture that he was there at the some of you maybe saw this picture at the display there.

And I took it to show this boy. This boy is Ricardino. Ricardino is a short it's short for for Ricardino.

Ricardino his father he was the result of a ministry of George my son. He led him to the Lord and when George came to the States George asked me dad could you give assistance to this family because I have been working giving Bible stuff to this family and then I start visiting this family and I found this kid and this kid was very scared to any other human being he would stay away hidden in his bedroom every time I entered the house but I noticed because the way I teach the Bible we get it gets so bubbling and asking questions and I like to make fun of things and we were laughing sometimes and he started becoming curious and he would peek through the door and look at and every time he peeked through the door I saw you and then he hid it and then it didn't take long he was in my lap and he was playing with me and I was playing with him and today after a long time of this developing this relationship he told his mom mom

[40 : 49] I didn't have any friends but now I have a friend and I have a best friend and oh who is it Mr.

Bernard he's my best friend I felt very good because I was able to help their parents also to come to understand the freedom we have in Christ and the joy we have in this family today from all the brothers and sisters we have in Brazil they ask me almost every day when are you coming back that's their question they have a daughter too Julia and Julia found Carol started teaching English to her daughter and the English classes became a counseling section where she taught some English but then the girl started sharing their heart with Carol and talking about problems in school and Carol became her best friend so we are very happy to be able to know that we can as we grow older become we can be mentoring our grandkids and also the young families in our churches we will finish this time with a word of prayer we thank the Lord for this opportunity of taking notes of those important things and the scripture that we can see that is directed to us so we can we'll be able to to minister to our grandkids and many of the other families and always being willing to do what you are we are supposed to do while we are here we thank you Lord for the wonderful ministry you give to each one of us in Christ

Jesus name we pray amen