



Christian Parenting *in a* Secular World

Parenting with Love

Then children were brought to him that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked the people, but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven." And he laid his hands on them and went away.

Matthew 19:13-15

Parenting with Love

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.

John 13:34

Acceptance

*Accept one another, then,
just as Christ accepted you,
in order to bring praise to God.*

Romans 15:7 NIV

Acceptance

Children need to know that we accept them...unconditionally, just as they are.

We accept our children based on who they are, no matter what they might do or say, no matter how badly they may fail or foul up.

Children feel secure and valued when they know Mom and Dad accept and love them for who they are, not whether they perform well, succeed, or become like them.

Ultimately, acceptance gives children a secure base from which they can explore the world.

Acceptance

Is your acceptance based on how they perform?

Do you subtly withdraw acceptance without even realizing it?

Are you communicating acceptance at every opportunity whether they do well or not, win or lose or have a good day or not?

Share one example recently where you intentionally communicated acceptance?

Appreciation

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people,

1 Timothy 2:1

giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Ephesians 5:20

Appreciation

Children blossom when they know their parents appreciate and are thankful for them.

Parents can express appreciation for their children in private or in public, in written word or in spoken word, with physical gestures or a simple wink.

Take note that acceptance needs to precede appreciation. In fact, appreciation without complete and unconditional acceptance is manipulation.

So, practice accepting your children as they are...appreciate them for the “natural bent” of who they are.

Appreciation

Do your kids know you appreciate and are thankful for them?

What are some ways you can express appreciation for your kids?

Do you show your child more encouragement, compliments and appreciation than correction, discipline or keeping them in line?

Do you give 10 “atta boys” for every “you jerk?”

Do you end discipline with love and appreciation?

Affection

...and so train the young women to love their husbands and children,

Titus 2:4

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

Affection

Children crave affection. Loving words and appropriate touch communicates affection to our children.

It informs them that they are worth loving; that they are lovable.

If parents do not provide loving words and affectionate touch, children will seek it elsewhere, often “looking for love in all the wrong places.”

The affection that children see modeled in your marriage gives them a sense of security in the family. It also sets an example of godly, loving affection they can emulate in their lives.

Affection

Do you give your kids plenty of hugs, kisses, and tell them often that you love them?

Do you believe you can't give too much affection to your kids?

Do you demonstrate affection in your marriage so your kids see you love each other?

Do you share affection equally to your kids?

Do you adequately provide affectionate words and touch so they will not seek it elsewhere, i.e. they will not "look for love in all the wrong places?"

Availability

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Matthew 19:13-15

Availability

In some ways this is the most vital key to loving our kids, if we are NOT WITH THEM none of the other “A’s” happen.

Children need parents who remain available to them—emotionally, mentally, and physically.

Remaining available to our children takes time. In fact, children spell love “T-I-M-E.”

Show your children how much you love them by remaining available to talk with them, play with them, give them a hug, listen to them, or just “hang out” with them on a regular basis.

Availability

Deep down do you believe you are available enough to your kids?

When you are with them are you available emotionally, mentally, and physically?

Do your children feel valued because you spend “TIME” with them?

Do you make an excuse for your availability by thinking you spend quality time with them?

Do your life priorities include being available to your kids to talk with them, play with them, give them a hug, listen to them, or just “hang out” with them on a regular basis?

Accountability

So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Romans 14:12

each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

1 Corinthians 3:13-15

Accountability

By holding children accountable, we give them a sense of responsibility.

We hold our children accountable for their actions and their words and to complete tasks that support the family.

At the same time, we balance accountability with love.

Rules and accountability without loving relationships leads to rebellion.

Relationships without rules, on the other hand, leads to irresponsibility.

Healthy accountability provides both rules and relationship.

Accountability

How do you hold your kids accountable, is it bathed in love or guilt and anger?

Do you hold them accountable for their actions, their words, and their attitudes?

Do you hold them accountable to completing tasks that support the family?

Do you balance rules with relationships remembering: rules and accountability without love leads to rebellion while relationships without rules, on the other hand, lead to irresponsibility?

Authority

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.

Romans 13:1

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

Ephesians 6:1

Authority

Authority reflects relationship and leadership.

The parent desires above all the well being of the child.

The parent properly uses the law seeking to lead their kids to Jesus.

Parents model servant leadership, guide with authority, model grace, and set examples.

This kind of parenting teaches kids there are limits but also that there is freedom to make good choices within the limits.

As the child grows this parent seeks to transfer the child from their authority to the authority of the Lord.

Authority

Does your parenting reflect loving relationship or autocratic authority?

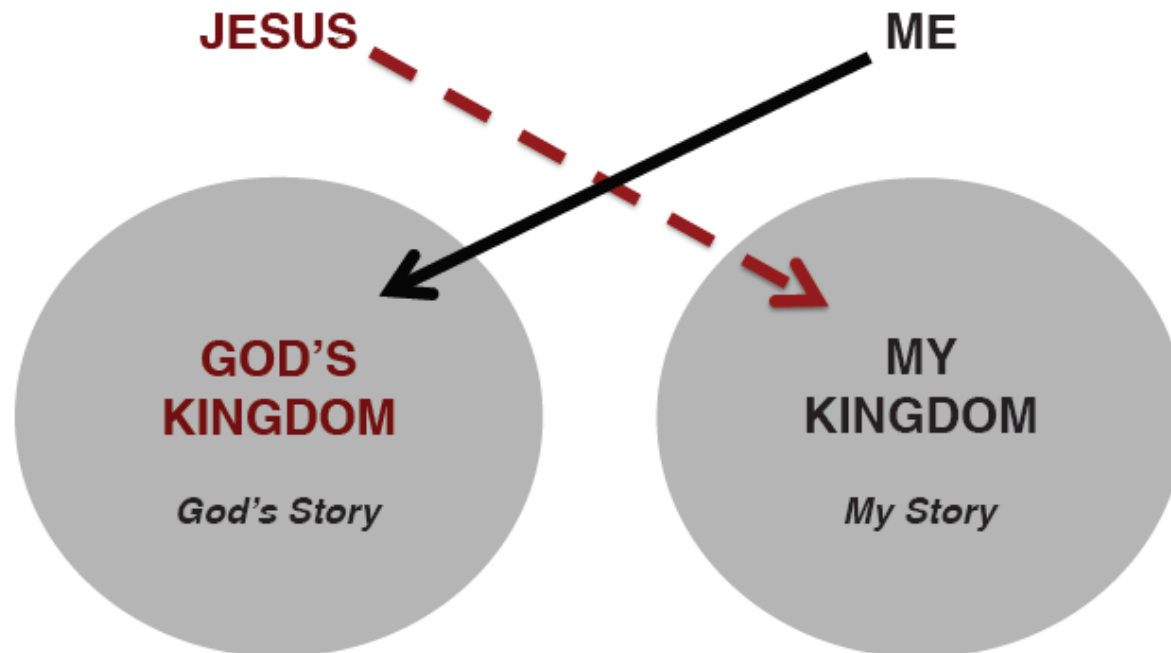
When you exercise authority is your primary desire above all, the well-being of your child?

Do you give limits through rules and guidelines and use failure to point kids to the necessity of the cross?

Are you teaching your kids that there are limits but also that there is freedom to make good choices within the limits?

Are you continually seeking to transfer the child from your authority to the authority of the Lord?

GOD'S KINGDOM AND MY KINGDOM



- We often believe Jesus joins our kingdom, *where we are king*, to make it work.
- When our kingdom fails we believe God has failed to come through for us.
- God places is in **His** Kingdom, *where Jesus is King*, to accomplish His purposes.
- When we seek His Kingdom and His Righteousness He provides all we need.

Matthew 6:33

Love Establishes the Foundation

Love must always precede Limits.

Without love, limits are perceived as punishment rather than discipline or correction.

Based on what you have learned please indicate your level of intentionality and effectiveness in the following areas.

Acceptance – Unconditional love develops a sense of security and value.

On a scale of 1 (least) to 7 (most) how would you evaluate your intentionality in showing acceptance and unconditional love to each of your children - taking into account their age and developmental level?

Child's name & age _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

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List any intentional changes God is leading you to make in this area of parenting with love.