

Wisdom for Families

Passage: Proverbs 22:6

Series: Everyday

Date: 20/8/2017

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[PPT]

the Australian Temperament Project has been tracing hundreds of children from infancy since 1983. And while researchers have been able to show that aggressive five-year-olds with short attention spans and poor social skills are at greater risk than their milder peers of turning into dangerous drivers, heavy drinkers, risk-takers and law-breakers in adulthood, temperament is not destiny. A significant number of children with "difficult" temperaments had learnt to moderate these traits over time. Between the ages of 12 and 14, many children, difficult in their early years, get an opportunity to remake themselves under the influence of the right friends and involved parents.

Three-quarters of children identified as at risk of turning into troubled adolescents did not fulfil their destiny. (And quite a few who led a charmed childhood later turned into big worries, partly as the result of a poor choice of high school friends).

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/opinion/give-me-a-child-until-he-is-133-five/2006/08/25/1156012735774.html?page=2>



Proverbs 22:6 "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it."

Issue I have with this is not training A child - it's training MY child!

- [piano / maths / reading / guitar]

Know why that is. Not that my children are more challenging than any other. It is about me. This is personal.

[PPT]

There is high anxiety in parenting

Afterall:

- Parents want perfect Children
- Children want perfect parents

But

- Parents are imperfect.
- Children are imperfect

- [gathering parents as youth pastor]
- parents can feel sense of failure
- and be defensive of the parenting choices they make



[PPT]

It seems, the perfect parent is merited on the perfect child.

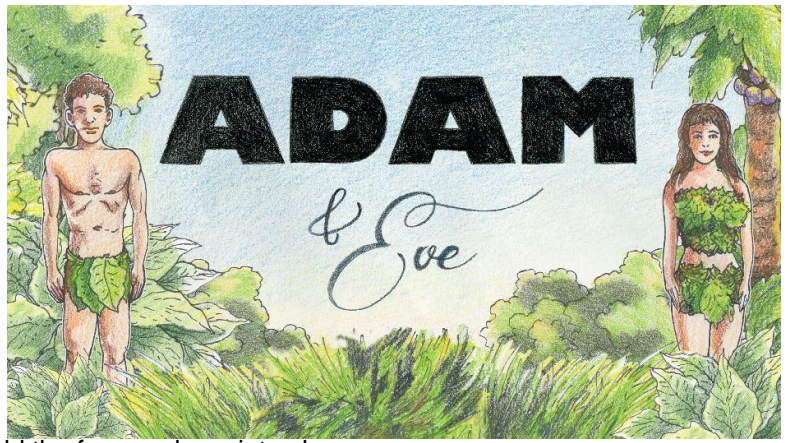
- we are so performance orientated
- (Allan Meyers at LifeWell conference) your rise or fall as an effective parent is what happens in Isle 3
- Unhealthy way of living - that my sense of success or failure is left in the choices/behaviour of a two year old, 17 year old.
- I often think about the greatest Father of all - God. Father of Israel. Look at what happened there!

[PPT]

The Bible is full of powerful insights for parenting but very few good parents

We didn't start well - our great great...grandparents

- Adam and Eve - talk about a dysfunctional family
- blame game - Adam quick to blame Eve for causing him to fall into sin. Eve passed the blame onto the Serpent
- Fatal Jealousy - One of their sons killed the other one



Gone downhill from there

- Noah had a drinking problem
- Abraham offered his wife to another man
- Rebekah schemed with her son to deceive her husband Isaac
- Jacob promoted jealousy in his boys so they sold the favoured son into slavery
- High Priest Eli lost total control of how his boys acted in the temple
- David had an affair and his son started a rebellion

...

In comparison to the parents described in the Bible, mine were incredible.

Could it be that when it comes to parenting the only people who know it all

- are selling a book
- just had a baby
- faking it
- recent graduates from Bible College

The Bible is honest enough to remind me that parenting is hard, families are messy.

There is a degree of dysfunction in every family, every parent and every child.

I deeply know that God wants me to be a responsible dad, but I keep finding I get in the way.

My anger, anxiety, boundaries, history, daily work, personality...

I am not sure I have what it takes to be a great Dad.

[Am I the kind of Dad my kids deserve...too often the answer is NO]

[PPT]

So let's not miss the point in the History of the Scriptures

Our fragility as families doesn't prevent God from working through us.

- What if God's plan is to do amazing work through ordinary people?
- What if God is not wanting you to impress God, others or even your children with your ability to parent
- But instead to impress your children with the love and character of God.

That BECAUSE you are fragile and a person still being made in the image of Jesus and we are in families full of fragility and frailty and brokenness - God's grace, strength, love and character is displayed.

[PPT]

Imperfect parents and families help us grow up

Adapt to Reality.

- Dealing with imperfect
- Grief, forgiveness, acceptance

Love and connect with others

- Even when it doesn't go my way

Take ownership



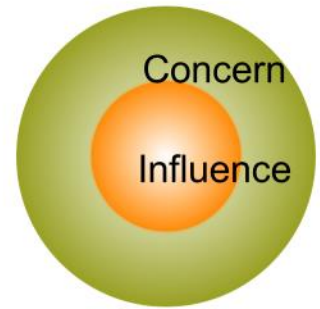
- Teaches us to take ownership of our issues
- “What is my rubbish”

Covey: CIRCLE of CONCERN and CIRCLE of INFLUENCE

[PPT]

- A Circle of Concern encompasses the wide range of concerns we have, such as our health, our children, problems at work, the amount of government borrowing, or the threat of war.
- A Circle of Influence encompasses those concerns that we can do something about. They are concerns that we have some control over.

In our lives we have a range of concerns - what has God given me to influence? What can I do something about?



[PPT]

Children – (and we all are) If you have grief with your parents, what can you do?

- How does a child discover who they are when they live in the shadow of their parents?
- Often when it is hard. In the challenge.
- Too often this can be in risky behaviours, drinking, relationships, breaking relationship
- But how about make hard but godly choices like honouring your parents even when they are not honourable.
- [Jas – leaving engineering to become missionary]



Proverbs 22:6 “Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.”

[PPT]

For parents it is very easy to make such a verse all about children.

- this is what they need to learn
- this is what they need to do...

And fail to realise the first work that needs to be one is in ourselves.

- Here is our 1st place of influence
- here is our 1st call to change

It is true Parents have a profound influence on children for better or worse
Way families start their children can impact their destiny

this is why governments, NGO and the churches invest in families
it seems whatever happens in the family makes an impression on the world.

But I want to bring this closer to home.

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it seems whatever happens in the family makes an impression on the world.

But I want to bring this closer to home.

Whatever God does in you will make an impression on your children.

My Parents weren't perfect.

[PPT]

Close in Prayer