FBS “Parenting Matters: Wisdom from God’s Word—Dependence on the Lord” 6-4-17

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**Intro.** Parenting is hard. It begins with babies who can’t communicate too well except through cries. Sometimes nursing is hard or bottle feeding. Most Dads don’t like to change diapers. You have to cover outlets in homes, protect toddlers from sharp corners on furniture, get used to color crayons on the wall, torn papers, a mess made from whatever they get their hands on. As they age, they eat more, mess up more clothes & dishes & get into their toys (smart phones & video games). Then they start going through puberty & smelling & needing constant showers. And they eat you out of house & home. And they start taking an interest in the opposite sex. And they start driving. And then they want $$ to eat with their friends. And then they want $$ for college. And then they move out & you cry about their leaving, even after they have dirtied everything & worn out the furniture! Throughout all the growing up years, you pour a great deal into your children & you wonder if they are going to turn out alright. As we conclude our series on “Parenting Matters: Wisdom from God’s Word,” today we look again at Proverbs & “Dependence on the Lord.” Prov 3:5-6; 16:20; 22:17-21; 28:14-26; 29:25

Theme: Parenting

Background: Proverbs is Solomon’s advice to his son about life—knowing what is right & doing it.

* What I’m talking to you about today should grow out of a personal relationship with the Lord. You know Christ has died for your sins & risen & you’ve surrendered to Him. The areas I’m going to talk to you about today are not so you can work for your salvation, but because you are called to be responsible & faithful in light of God saving you
* **Basic actions to take in parenting children while depending on/trusting in the Lord (channeling His grace):**

**1. Follow the Lord’s wisdom & trust the Lord with the results (3:5-6)**

* We must trust in the Lord & not lean on our understanding
* Proverbs offers much in terms of parenting, discipline, work ethic, handling finances, trusting the Lord, finding wisdom from His Word, communication, character, marriage, neighbors, business & more—of course, there is greater clarity & guidance in the rest of the Bible which is given for our instruction (cf. Romans 15:4)

Illus: The #1 reason I hear from Christians who don’t tithe (give the Lord 10%) is this—I can’t afford to tithe. That’s using our understanding & not trusting the Lord & His wisdom. He says He can do more for you with your 90% or less if you give Him at least 10%, than you could giving Him less than that—that doesn’t add up in human wisdom but it multiplies greatly in God’s wisdom

**2. Think carefully before you speak or act & trust the Lord with the results (16:20; 29:25)**

* Your child will face various challenges & heartbreaks & discouragements in life—sometimes it will be for something they have said or done or sometimes it will be because they are not at the same level as their peers—this happens in academics (when kids want to go out for a math or science or spelling team, but they lose out to stronger competitors) or in sports (when some kids are not as athletic or don’t work as hard as others or parents don’t help their children become better in-between practices)
* You may want to say something to a teacher or coach, but you need to think carefully about it, because it could make things worse (a child sitting 2 innings every game may have to sit 4 innings every game)—once you have thought about it, you may need to say something, but trust the Lord with the results

Illus: Teach your kids to stand up & speak for themselves as they mature. My Dad taught me to talk to coaches & teachers when I didn’t understand something or wanted to know what I could do to improve & I benefitted in the classroom & on the ball field.

Illus: For some people, the fear of man keeps them from doing what is right—they may fear their boss & let injustice toward co-workers continue for fear of losing their job or not getting a promotion—your only fear should be displeasing the Lord & when you need to speak up or take action, trust the Lord with the results

* It’s easy to fall to the temptation of worry over such things & not trust the Lord, but the Christian life is about being faithful to the Lord & trusting Him to provide & take care (even when you can’t see the reasons why He is doing something or allowing something)

Illus: As a teenager, I didn’t understand why my coach didn’t play me in the championship game of the 1st round but had I played, we would have won & had we won, I wouldn’t have listened to God getting my attention to call me into ministry—I may have put off that calling for years, but He knew what He was doing although I didn’t

**3. Listen to & learn from God’s Word that your trust may grow in the Lord (22:17-21)**

* Of all the spiritual disciplines for the Christian life—prayer, fasting, giving, witnessing, gathering in fellowship, worship, meditation & such—I believe the greatest is reading & studying God’s Word, because it is God’s directions for us & everything else flows out of His Word
* The more you read God’s Word & listen to others teach it, the more you should grow in your faith, because you learn to trust the Lord more

Illus: There is more than one school in life—you may attend a school of higher education or you may attend the school of hard knocks, but both will try to teach you something. It is easier to grow if you learn from others by listening than if you insist on doing it your own way & learn by lots of failures—I had a friend in middle school who could light it up on the basketball court shooting from his shoulder, but he never listened to our 7th grade coach who taught us to shoot over our heads. My friend always got his shot blocked after that & never played after that because of discouragement—listen & learn from God’s Word to grow

**4. Reject crookedness, greed & trusting in self while trusting in the Lord for growth (28:14-26)**

* The ways of the world will try to entice you to cut corners in business & gain dishonestly from others & keep everything you earn for yourself & figure things out on your own, but you must listen to God’s wisdom & reject those temptations & trust in the Lord for real growth
* Parents must reject these temptations or they will easily pass them off to their children—don’t be deceived into having the wrong focus in life—it isn’t about how much $$ you make or how well you are known or taking care only of yourself, but it’s about trusting the Lord & obeying Him & letting Him direct your life

Illus: I read a story of a man who said, “One day, while my son Zac and I were out in the country, climbing around in some cliffs, I heard a voice from above me yell, ‘Hey Dad! Catch me!’ I turned around to see Zac joyfully jumping off a rock straight at me. He had jumped and then yelled ‘Hey Dad!’ I became an instant circus act, catching him. We both fell to the ground. For a moment after I caught him I could hardly talk. When I found my voice again I gasped in exasperation: ‘Zac! Can you give me one good reason why you did that???’ He responded with remarkable calmness: ‘Sure...because you’re my Dad.’ His whole assurance was based in the fact that his father was trustworthy. He could live life to the hilt because I could be trusted. Isn’t this even more true for a Christian?” (Tim Hansel, *Holy Sweat*, 46-47).

**Reiterate the 4 actions:** follow the Lord’s wisdom & trust Him with the results, think carefully before you speak or act & trust the Lord with the results, listen to & learn from God’s Word that your trust may grow in the Lord, & reject crookedness, greed & trusting in self while trusting in the Lord for growth.

**Conc.** I watched my parents pour the wisdom of the Lord into me & my brothers every way they knew how. We got God’s Word & prayer & Bible memory verses at home. We were at church every time the doors opened—SS, morning & evening worship, Wednesday nights. Dad sometimes took us with him on visitation. We would go to revival services & Bible conferences & visit others churches on vacation. They taught us about tithing & witnessing. And then they trusted the Lord. They trusted the Lord when my younger brother began to hang with the wrong crowd. They trusted the Lord when my older brother was in a bad situation at college. They trusted the Lord when I argued with my brothers & tried to sound more spiritual. They trusted the Lord after following His wisdom & today 2 of their 3 sons serve the Lord in vocational ministry & the other is one of the most committed laymen you’ll ever meet. They would say it’s because God has been good & gracious to them & He has, but they have also been faithful to channel His grace into the next generation. Now, you can do just like them & pour as much of the Lord’s influence as you can & 1 of your children may not serve the Lord (Proverbs are general truths about life). But if none of your children are serving the Lord through the church, you haven’t followed God’s instructions for parenting. I know a couple who have 5 children & they wanted to be their friends & they practiced a “let’s go to church when we feel like it” approach a “Christianity is cool but don’t take it too seriously” approach & none of their adult children serve the Lord today. They’re friends with their kids but they went 0-for-5 in rooting them in God’s Word. Don’t let that be you! First, surrender your life to Jesus, who gave His life for you. Then, commit to live out the Christian life faithfully & responsibly & get mentored if you need help. Then, trust the Lord with the results after you have poured as much into your children as you can.