

Reforming Modern Youth Evangelism and Discipleship

by Paul Washer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of getting the Gospel right and understanding repentance and faith in order to truly disciple and evangelize youth.

Duration: 55:38

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 3:16, Acts 17:30, Revelation 3:20

Topics: "Discipleship"

Description

In this sermon, Paul Washer addresses the issue of modern youth evangelism and discipleship. He highlights the importance of approaching these practices in a biblical way. Washer emphasizes the need for creativity and adaptability in reaching young people, regardless of their background or location. He also mentions the importance of teaching diligently and recommends resources such as Scott Brown's book and Lou Priolo's book for further study.

Transcript

The following message by Paul Washer was given at the National Center for Family Integrated Church's 2010 conference, Love the Church. This message is one of 35 available in the conference album found at ncfic.org. Please welcome Paul Washer on the subject, Reforming Modern Youth Evangelism and Discipleship. Father, I pray that you would take this time, help us Lord, to get to the important truths, to teach about evangelism, discipleship of youth.

In Jesus' name, Amen. One of the first things that we need to look at is there is a problem in the title. There is.

The evangelism and discipleship of youth, that in itself presents a problem. Someone asked me years ago, how do you preach the gospel to the Agvaduna tribe? And I said, I don't preach the gospel to the primitive Agvaduna tribe. I preach the gospel to men.

Anytime we pull out and segregate a certain type of person or certain people group as though they needed to be treated differently with regard to the gospel, already we're starting to get into dangerous water. Do you understand what I'm saying? We've come to the point where there's this type of gospel for this person, this way of doing ministry for this person. And I'm sorry, you're outside of the sufficiency of Scripture when

you start saying those things.

We do not see all this segregation and specialization in ministry. We simply do not. So we need to be very, very careful.

Now, I want to go through just a few things. When you talk about reforming youth evangelism, the first thing you've got to look at is do you have the true gospel? What is being preached today in America? We say that Americans are gospel-hardened. All people are gospel-hardened, but that's not the problem.

Americans are gospel-ignorant because many of those preaching the gospel are ignorant. We've taken the gospel of Jesus Christ, reduced it down to four spiritual laws or five things God wants you to know. And if someone says yes at the end of all our questions and pray a prayer after us, we declare them saved.

Because of that, the church, the entire evangelical community in the United States of America is populated with Christians who are not Christians. With lost people. So the first thing, you have to get the gospel right.

If you've ever shared the gospel and you've never thought about this, you probably have not shared the gospel. The greatest problem in all the Scriptures is this. If God is just, He cannot forgive you.

The greatest theological, philosophical problem in all the Bible is this. How can God forgive? If God's good and God is just, He cannot forgive any more than a judge can be presented with a murderer, proven murderer, and simply say, I forgive you. Go on.

That presents tremendous ethical problems. Tremendous ethical problems when you say God forgives the sinner. If you say God casts all sinners into hell to abide under His eternal wrath, there's no philosophical problem.

It's exactly what they deserve. It's what justice demands. The problem occurs when God forgives a man.

How can He do that and still be just? There's only one way. That God becomes a man, lives a perfect life as the God-man. He goes to that tree.

On that tree, the sins of His people were imputed to Him. And on that cross, our sins were not only imputed to Christ, but Christ was treated before the judgment bar of God as we ought to be treated. For this reason, He cried out, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? God forsook Him and the Son of God was crushed under the wrath of His Father.

Because only in that way could the demands of justice be satisfied. And therefore, the wrath of God appeased and make it just for God to be, well, make it this. God is now just and the justifier of wicked men.

If you've never shared that or heard that, you know very little about the Gospel. So when we talk about youth evangelism and discipleship, the great problem today is we don't know what the Gospel is. Please understand me.

I'm not just speaking clichés or being extravagant with my words. This is true. Someone asked me about discipleship today.

Well, discipleship exploded on the scene in the early 70s. Why? Because had all these people getting saved and yet continued to live ungodly lives. And so the idea was, how do we get Christians to live like

Christians? Well, the problem is we're not discipling them.

No, that wasn't the problem. The problem was not the lack of discipleship. The problem is they weren't converted.

And so you bring in all this discipleship, and what you're trying to do is train a bunch of goats to act like sheep, and it doesn't work. You get someone saved, you turn them into a sheep, supernaturally they act like a sheep. Now, we need to do discipleship, we need Bible training and everything else, but the big problem is we don't understand the Gospel, and we know very little about conversion.

So many people today, if you walked up to them and you said, are you saved? Yes, I am. How do you know? Once in my... I prayed a prayer and asked Jesus to come in. They are trusting in their decision.

They're not looking unto Jesus. They're trusting in something they did. They're not laying upon the promises of God.

And so the great problem, starting out, is getting the Gospel right. And I could just speak on that the whole time, but I'm sorry, I have to go on. Go to the HeartCry website, we have a whole section on the Gospel.

About what does it mean for Christ to have suffered the wrath of Almighty God in our stead? To be crushed, for it says, and it pleased the Lord, Yahweh, to crush Him, so that God might be just, and yet the justifier of wicked men. Let me just go back to that for a second, I don't want to leave it off. In Proverbs, you know what it says.

He who justifies the wicked is an abomination to the Lord. And yet Romans 3 tells us God justified the wicked. So how can God justify the wicked without becoming an abomination? Because He bore the iniquity of the wicked, satisfied His own justice, and appeased His wrath and made it possible.

That's the Gospel. Now, when we preach the Gospel, another problem with youth evangelism and discipleship is the call to salvation. Do you want to pray in prayer and ask Jesus to come into your life? Find that for me anywhere in the Bible, and I will pay you a lot of money.

Find it. It's not there. It does not say this in Mark 1, verses 14 and 15.

It doesn't say that Jesus comes to Israel and He says, The time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God is at hand. Now, who would like to ask Me into their heart? That's not what it says. The time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God is at hand.

Repent and believe the Gospel. Turn from your sin and cast yourself upon Christ. And so it's a call to repentance and faith.

And that's a very difficult thing, because if you run somebody through the typical evangelistic questions, and then close the deal, it's so easy to close the deal. All you have to say is this, Would you like to pray and ask Jesus to come into your heart? Because He will come in, because He promised that He's standing at the door and knocking, and whoever will open up the door, He'll come in. So if you ask Him right now, sincerely, He'll come in.

Do you want to do that? Yes. So the person asks Jesus to come in, and when the person's finished praying, the preacher asks them, Did Jesus come in? And the person says, Well, I'm not really sure. And then the preacher says, Of course He did.

If He didn't come in, He's a liar, because He promised to come in. It's not an exaggeration. Many of you have heard this, and many of you have preached it.

The problem is, Jesus isn't knocking at the door of the sinner's heart in Revelation 3.20. He's knocking on the door of the church. And you need to be very careful that you don't take Scripture out of context. The evangelical witness in the New Testament is this, If you've heard the Gospel message, God calls all men everywhere now to repent, to turn from their sins and believe the Gospel.

In the old days, if you look at all the old books that were written, it is phenomenal how many of them were written on the content of the Gospel. What is the Gospel? How many of them were written on true conversion and identifying and understanding repentance and faith and helping sinners work through the Scriptures to have assurance of salvation? You won't find anything like that in a modern Christian bookstore. Why? Because we've reduced it all down to a track.

So after sharing the Gospel with someone, I say, Now God commands you to repent, to repent of your sins. And they say, Well, what does that mean? I say, It means to change your mind. Now, right now you're thinking, Oh, it's got to mean more than that.

That sounds too superficial. You don't understand mind. Mind and heart refers to the very core, the very essence of everything you are.

Your will, your emotions, affections, everything. You want a perfect example of repentance? I'll give it to you. The Apostle Paul, he leaves for Damascus and he believes that Jesus Christ is a false prophet and a blasphemer and still dead, and he believes every Christian on the face of the earth at best ought to be imprisoned, at worst ought to be killed because they are a blasphemous cult.

That's what he thought in his mind. On the road to Damascus, he is confronted with Jesus Christ. Now, do you want to know why he stayed three days without eating and drinking? I'll tell you why.

His entire reality was totally and completely disintegrated. Everything he fought with his mind was wrong. And he came to find out everything he was against was right.

Everything he believed about Jesus was wrong. Everything he believed about the people of God, wrong. And he sat there.

Why? It'd be the same as if you went out on your porch tomorrow morning, you woke up and you found the whole sky totally filled with UFOs and aliens going everywhere. Your whole view of reality is shattered. If you turned on the faucet and the water ran up instead of down.

The sky was green and the grass was blue. Everything. You see, that's what I mean.

Change your mind. That's not a superficial thing. Your literal view of reality is dissolved, disintegrated, obliterated, and a new reality takes its place.

And you say, here's something you need to understand. That old cliché about you got it in your head but you don't have it in your heart? I don't believe that. You don't have it in your head or your heart.

Because if you have grasped with your mind that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world, the only way to God, that He is everything that everything was ever made for, that thinking is going to change the entire course of your practical living. Repentance and faith. Faith is throwing off all regard in every confidence

except Christ alone.

Faith is you embracing the Christian life, Christ alone, having someone come up to you and say, you are such a good person. If there's anybody going to heaven, it's going to be you. And when you hear that, you are so nauseous that you throw up.

And you cry out, away from me to God, to God alone be the glory. Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I have nothing but Christ alone.

I want nothing but Christ alone. It's faith in Jesus Christ. We also have to understand some other things that are very, very important.

And that is a biblical understanding of assurance. And we're going to talk a little bit about that tonight. Now what do I mean? Most people today, most young people are disturbed about the condition of their heart.

So what do they do? They go to the pastor and they say, I don't know if I'm saved. A lot of pastors, most pastors, this is what they'll say. Well, let me ask you, was there a point in time in your life when you prayed and asked Jesus to come in? And they'll go, well, yes.

Well, were you sincere? Well, I think so. Well, then this is just the devil bothering you. You're saved.

That's a damnable heresy that just came out of that preacher's mouth. It's not true. Show me in the New Testament where someone is dealt with that way.

Paul comes to the church in Corinth. And there are some wayward things going on in Corinth. And please, please understand me, Corinth is not the model church that we're to look back on in order to justify carnality.

That's not why the letter was written. He doesn't come to them and say, let me ask you guys, when you prayed and asked Jesus to come into your heart, were you sincere? That's not what he says. He goes to them and he says this, I'm afraid.

And then he says, test yourselves, examine yourselves to see whether or not you are in the faith. Isn't that amazing? How are they to test themselves? Not by other Christians, because he said that it wasn't wise when people compared themselves by themselves. How are you to test yourself? In light of Scripture.

Let me give you a forgotten book, 1 John. The purpose of it, it's a series of tests and I'm going to teach on that tonight. 1 John is a series of tests that all the old churchmen used.

And you look at that, the purpose for which it was written, these things I have written unto you, believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. The purpose of that book is to compare your life to that book, to what that book says a Christian is, to determine whether or not you've been born again. Is that done today? No, it's not done.

Let me go back to another thing that's very important that I don't want to overlook. When someone has repented of their sins, they come to me and they'll say, I need to be saved. And I'll say, well, let's look at repentance.

I explain to them what repentance is, but more than that, I ask them this, have you heard the Gospel? Yes. Well now, this is repentance. Is it a reality in your life? Is this happening in your life? Do you see now that

you are wrong? Yes, brother Paul.

Do you see your sin? Do you see God's righteousness? Not only that, but have your affections changed a bit since you've heard this Gospel? The sin that you once boasted of, are you now ashamed of? The sin that you once loved, are you seeing how wrong and disgusting it is? Yes, brother Paul, I see bits of that and parts of that. I understand what you're saying. Good, those are the first fruits of repentance.

Now you lack one thing, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, a lot of evangelists just close the deal right there. Again, they go back to pray the prayer with me and it's all done.

I can't do that. Because you see, they're saved by believing promises. So I look at them and say, faith is believing the promises of God.

Do you believe them? Do you have assurance that He has saved you? No, not really. I mean, I understand the Gospel message, but no, there's not that assurance you're talking about. Well then, let's go through the promises.

It may go for hours. It may go for days. It may go for weeks.

It may go for months that I'll be ministering to this person with regard to the promises of God. I'll give you an example, a perfect example. I've used it a million times.

Maybe you've heard it. I was up preaching just south of Alaska. Got up in the pulpit and this huge man walked through the door.

Saddest human being I've ever seen. I preached the Gospel. He sat there and looked at me the whole time.

After we were done, I went down to him. I said, sir, what is wrong with you? You're the saddest human being I've ever met in my life. And he pulled out a manila envelope and had an x-ray on it.

And he said, I'm going to die in three weeks. I've lived out on a working cattle ranch all my life. You can only get there by bush plane or floating down a river.

He says, I've never been afraid of anything in my life, but I'm afraid now. I'm going to die. I believe there's a God.

I've never been to a church. I've never had a Bible, but someone one time told me about some man named Jesus. But I don't understand what that means.

And so I said, did you hear the message? He said, I heard it. I said, did you understand it? He said, yes, I did. But is that it? For most people, they would have said yes, that's it.

Welcome to the family of God. I said, sir, are you believing this? Can you trust in it? Can you step off into eternity with what you have? No. I said, do you see your sin? He was obviously broken over his sin.

There was the beginnings of repentance. I said, but trust in Christ. Throw yourself on Christ.

He just couldn't. He could understand it, but there was nothing there. And so I said, sir, I'm to fly out tomorrow.

You're going to die in three weeks. I'll cancel my plane ticket. We'll stay here for three weeks until either you have assurance of salvation or you die and go to hell.

And that night we began. And fortunately, it only lasted that night. A couple hours into the matter, we were going through promise after promise.

Not me manipulating him into a decision or coaxing him into believing that if he prayed some sinner's prayer, it would automatically introduce him into heaven. It's faith. We went through promise after promise, praying and calling out on God and him searching the Scriptures, seeing the promises, me opening the Scriptures to him.

And then we got back and I said, sir, let's look at John 3.16 again. It's my favorite verse in the Bible. Let's look at it.

He said, well, we've looked at it before. I said, I know. Let's pray and look at it again.

And we prayed. I said, now just read the text. He began to read it.

And he goes, I'll never forget those huge hands of his. My Bible was on his lap. And he went, well, for God so loved the world that He gave.

And then he went, oh no, oh no. I'm saved. All my sins are gone.

I have eternal life. I'm going to heaven. I said, sir, how do you know that? He said, haven't you ever read this verse before? Do you see what's happening? The Spirit of God.

The new birth. And do you see what a blasphemous manner in which evangelism is done today? Oh, it's horrid. So we must get that right.

Now, when someone makes a profession of faith, a young person makes a profession of faith, on a Sunday morning, I don't put my arm around him and have him stand up front and go, I just want everyone to come around and welcome him to the family of God. I'm not going to do that. What am I going to do? I'm going to tell them, I'm going to say, listen, just like I would with my own children, listen, are you believing in Christ? Yes, I am.

But the Scriptures say, if you are truly believing in Christ, you have eternal life. And I rejoice in that. I'm not going to crush any spark in him.

Praise God. But because we love you and because we recognize the value of your soul, we're going to meet with you, explain to you the way more thoroughly. We're going to do this until you come to a biblical assurance of your salvation.

And then I warn them, listen to me, right now you're full of joy. Many false converts are full of joy. If you walk out of here today and the providence of God begins to manifest itself in your life and little by little, your affections begin to change and you begin to want to be more like Christ and to know His Word, and little by little you're growing, and when you fall into sin, it kills you, it hurts you, and you want out of it and you start all over again.

If you're going through that, know that that is a great evidence of your conversion. But if you walk out of here today and you stay the same as you have or you fall back into sin, a waywardness from Christ, you

care not for the things of God, you have no affection for Christ, know this, you've got nothing here today. Do you see that? Now, a young person, let's say he's supposedly converted when he's 9 years old, 10 years old, seems to go to Sunday school and everything else, seems like a good kid.

When he gets 16, he turns into a rebel. I mean, just a rebel. What's done in evangelical Christianity today? I'll tell you for the most part what's done.

Someone walks up to him, a pastor, a mom, a dad, and says this, you know, Billy, you're a Christian, but you're not acting like one. And you need to act like a Christian because you're bringing shame to the name of Christ. That is not the way you biblically address that issue.

Not at all. Not at all. This is the way you address it.

Billy, several years ago, you made a profession of faith in Christ. You were even baptized in our church. Made a public declaration of Christ.

And for a few years, you seemed to walk and make some progress in the faith. But you have turned from Christ. You have turned from His Word.

You have turned from the people of God. Billy, I need you to be afraid. I need to warn you.

If you continue on in this path, it is evidence that you were never truly converted, that you have been reprobate from the very beginning. Make your calling and election sure. Turn to Christ now.

Turn back to Him, giving proof that you were truly regenerate, that you truly belonged to Him. Because if you continue on in this, know this, He never knew you. Do you see the difference? It's the difference between Christianity and American evangelicalism.

It's the difference between dealing with a soul properly, historically, or dealing with one according to the contemporary whims of a godless culture that exists within the so-called church. And so that's the way in youth evangelism and discipleship that we deal with people. Now, I'm not going to be able to get on to all the things that I want to get on to, but I want us to look at some things that are very important.

First of all, in youth evangelism and discipleship, we have a film here that Brother Vody made, The Return of Daughters. Somebody made it. It was a great film.

Well, let's make this one. A return of parents. Putting parents back into the equation.

Now, just listen to this. Ephesians 6.4 Fathers. The Greek word pater, masculine fathers.

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. The Old Testament is filled with this. The entire book of Proverbs, Deuteronomy 4, Deuteronomy 6, it is all filled with this, that the primary discipler in the life of a child, in the life of a youth until he leaves your home, is the father.

And if you're not doing that with your children, actively and consistently, know that you are in rebellion against your God. Now, I'm not going to mix words. I'm not going to say you need to try to do better.

I want you to know it is gross sin. There is a sense in which you're breaking covenant. You are not doing what you're required to do.

You have handed it off to someone else. How dare you? God never gave you that right. The man, the husband, the father is the primary discipler of wife and children.

It is what we are called to do, men. It is what we are called to do. And there's no way around it.

And these pastors who do not have time to disciple their own children consistently, and I would call that four or five times a week, they do not have time to do that, I would say that they no longer qualify as elders. It is this serious. You can't jump over commands.

You can't jump over qualifications. This is not the job of the youth minister. It is not the job of the Sunday school teacher.

And it is not the job of your wife. It is yours according to the Bible. So there's the return of parents.

Secondly, the return of elders. Now I want you to look at this. Acts 20, 28.

Before I read that, let me read this. Putting elders back into the equation, putting our children under the oversight of godly, qualified elders instead of turning them over to youth leaders who are oftentimes immature and unqualified. Do you realize you have stolen the elders from your children? In our fellowship in Radford, who teaches the children, if any children are taught, elders.

I turn my child over to a 19-year-old youth leader with mousse in his hair that knows nothing about godly, manly maturity? No way. Or even a sincere little girl who wants to teach Bible? No. It's not in Scripture.

There are elders. And they are to be the ones principally involved. Listen to what it says.

Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. Now I'm having to go fast because I've got a lot of material to go through. But I want you to listen to this.

Acts 20, 28. Be on guard, the elders, for yourselves and for all the flock. Not the older people in the flock.

Not the young couples in the flock. The elders are to be overseeing all the flock. And that includes the children.

But look what's done in most churches. The elders delegate that. It's completely over to someone else who may be a person who didn't even want to teach Sunday school, but they were coerced into it because of the need.

And so the children sit around all day long painting pictures of Noah. Oh, my dear friend. Children, I believe, and I grasp this from Ephesians 6.3 when children are told to honor their father and their mother.

Notice that Paul is writing the letter to the church, but he doesn't say, parents, tell your children that they should honor you. He tells the children in the letter. The letter was to be read in the congregation.

Children sit and learn preaching. You want to talk about discipleship? Why do you want to jump everything that God created and established to go to some other means? Are we more clever than God? God gave us elders. Part of an elder's duty is to care for all the flock.

Now, I want you to listen. This is the type of person that ought to be teaching our children. My covenant with Him was one of life and peace, and I gave them to Him as an object of reverence, so He revered me

and stood in awe of my name.

True instruction was in His mouth and unrighteousness was not found on His lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness and He turned many back from iniquity, for the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge and men should seek instruction from His mouth, for He is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. Malachi 2, 5 and 7. That's the type of man that ought to be teaching our children if we're talking about in the context of a church.

And in our church, they do that by sitting there when the preacher's preaching. We do about a five or ten minute thing prior to the larger sermon in which we go through. We're going through the 1689 London Catechism and we're teaching.

We direct that in a great manner to our children even though we have found out that the adults coming are going, man, I like the way you teach in that sermon because I can actually understand it. But then the children sit in there under preaching, under preaching. My two young boys, nine and six, we just finished making our way through Romans 9 and 10.

Did they get all of it? Their father didn't get all of it. But they got something, didn't they? They got truth. They had to deal with imputation.

They had to deal with sovereignty. They had to hear from their dad, your dad sits in the hand of a God who can crush him. But a God who is good and loving and kind.

Your life is in His hand. So we have a return of elders. Now, here's another thing.

A return of biblical fellowship. Allow the youth back into the fellowship of the saints. Novel idea.

Why don't we let them back in church? Hebrews 10, 24, 25, And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near. This is a gathering together of God's people. There's the oversight of elders and everything else all working together in this congregation of mutual edification.

And what you're going to do is take the youth and put them in another building. And you have separated them from God's fellowship. It's just not right.

Now, here's a place for our men. Men, we've got to do this. This isn't a fad.

This isn't some new methodology. This isn't some pragmatic thing that's going to work in your family. This is commandment.

This is wisdom from Scripture. And I know that I look pretty mean right now, but if you're not doing this, you're a rebel. And I'm going to call for repentance.

Now, Proverbs 13.20. Have any of you read it? Let's open our Bible. I didn't even put it down in my notes because I wanted to make sure we went to our Bibles on this one. 13.20 He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.

That right there shows at least the great majority of youth groups are totally and completely against the wisdom of Scripture. Because what is the youth group? Where did it come from? It came out of the

generation gap. What was that? Was that biblical? It was the idea that different stages of development in the human condition required different things.

And that like group needed to be put together. Like individuals needed to be put together. So, man, all the youth need to be together.

Have you ever asked yourself this question? Why? Why? No, you may be sitting there going, man, I don't like this guy. Why? He who walks with the wise will be wise. What have we done? We've taken the youth.

We've put them all together. Where should the youth be? The same place the children should be with the adults. There was a movie made several years ago with Russell Crowe in it called Master and Commander.

I always use this as an example. In it, Lucky Jack Aubrey, the British commander of a fleet, is fighting against the French privateers and they get into a tremendous battle at sea. They lash the boats together and Jack Aubrey's ship is going to make the final attack on board the enemy ship.

So, a captain has to be called up to lead the army into certain death, to jump the gap between the two ships and fight on sail, on mast, on pole until the battles won or lost. And something of a 14-year-old boy is chosen to lead. I submit to you, that 14-year-old boy had more than our 35-year-old men because of this doctrine of generation gap.

Because of this false idea based on an evolutionary model of adolescence in which all these little girls need to be grouped with little girls. Companions of fools are on the road to destruction. Little boys are supposed to be with little boys and usually governed by women.

Young men are supposed to be with young men. There is nothing more devastating than to turn loose a bunch of boys between 13 and now I extend it into the early 20's at least, into the 30's maybe. There is nothing more devastating because they are nothing more than a pack of fools, wild beasts, running together, untaught, untrained, unconformed to Scripture, never been taught in virtue, character or anything serious about the Christian faith.

They could not lead a charge into an enemy boat because their thumbs will be too tired playing on their Xbox. Or walking around malls like little girls used to. We have no men.

Because we send boys to be with boys, we have no women. Because we send girls to be with girls and they remain immature, frivolous, foolish and on the road to destruction. And it is not, gentlemen, what young boys want.

I'll never forget years ago when Ian was about 4 years old, we were at a park and I was out there on a Wednesday or something. I was the only man there. There were other boys playing.

Ian was playing on the park. He did some kind of flip in the air and half broke his neck. Jumped up and he goes, did you see that, dad? And I go, man, that was great.

That was... Dude, you nailed that one. Every little boy within the sounding of my voice came running to me and said, look at me, mister, I can do it too. What did they want? They wanted to be with a man and they wanted to be confirmed by a man.

Those boys want to be men and they'll never be men because men have left the post. They've left their post. Our boys have soft hands.

What are we doing? We don't turn them over to a youth group, we don't turn them over to a... No! Fathers, get your sons. They are your side armaments. They walk with you.

They're your men. And if you can't, if you live in the middle of Los Angeles or whatever, buy you camping gear, do stuff, buy a gun, go kill something, do something manly! Get those boys with you. Do you know that boys who hunt and fish with their fathers are 300% less likely to get involved in alcohol and drugs than those who participate in athletics? Why? Because still in athletics, don't think because you're taking your son to football practice, you're participating in his life.

No, you're just turning him over again to somebody else. You get that boy out there. There isn't a lot of dangerous things to do, but you get him out there in a snowstorm trying to track a wounded deer.

You get him kayaking up a river. You get him going with you. You take him on Saturdays.

Start something. Start building things. Do stuff.

He wants to be a man! And that little girl wants to be a girl. I cannot believe what happens when you really get interested in a young man or a young girl's life and bring them into the community of the adults. One time, my son Evan, we had been taking him out bow hunting.

Ian was doing something else at the time. We were just shooting bow in the backyard. We had woods all behind us.

And he's sitting there. He's like five years old. He's got his bow.

And all of a sudden, I catch something out of the corner of my eye. It was a rabbit. It jumped in.

And I go, Evan. He goes, What? It was a rabbit. He looked over there.

He goes, Can I get him, Dad? Can I get him? And I said, Yeah. I knew he was not going to hit this rabbit. So he pulls that bow back and he takes a step towards that rabbit.

He looks back at me and he goes, Meat's back on the menu, boys. But here's the thing. For the next two days, he walked around the house like this.

He said, Mom, I'm going outside. You stay here. I'm going outside because, well, that's what men do.

That's what they want. And fathers, those daughters need you just as much, if not more. Just as much, if not more.

Don't turn them over to... God gave them to you. He gave them to you. How many minutes? I've already gone past my time, I guess, haven't I? Who's got the clock on? I have ten minutes.

He gave them to you. And it's so hard, because I hear homeschoolers and they're lecturing on stuff and they live on 40 acres in Kansas and the woman's making pasta with her feet and everything, you know? And I'm like, yeah, but how do you do this in inner city Chicago? Because if it's what God wants, it's for everybody. All these people everywhere.

And I have to admit, I don't live on a farm anymore. We have to be inventive. We have to find things that we can do with our children and that is extremely important.

And then Lou Priolo has a book called Teaching Them Diligently. I recommend that book because what he talks about is teaching in the midst. My boys and I, we meet together probably about 40 minutes in the evening and go through Scripture.

Right now, we're going through the book of Romans. Until they leave my house, they will go through a section of Proverbs every day of their life with their dad. We do Scripture memory.

We do a lot of things. We try to make it interesting. We do a lot of stuff.

They need that. But there's teaching in the midst. And what that is is when you go out of your house and when you come into your house, when you rise up, when you go down, everything is about God.

Everything is about His commandments. And everything has significance. Everything.

Oh dear brothers, brothers, get your children. They're your disciples, not someone else's. They are your disciples.

Please understand that. Please. It's going to be costly.

Some of you may get a job offer that's paying twice as much and you're going to simply have to turn it down. Why? Because it's not going to leave time for you to be what you were called to be, which is if you're married and you have children, a husband and a father. It's just going to cost.

But it is so wonderful. It is so wonderful. Now, let me skip through some of these things.

I want to address an issue that is very important. I'm going to read a few things. It has been a long-standing method to use children and youth evangelism in order to reach parents.

It's very, very common on the mission field here, everywhere. This is accomplished primarily by sending Christian children and youth into the public arena to be a light in what I'll consider to be a great darkness. Now, so far, I don't think anybody could disagree with me on this issue.

Now, we homeschool our children and we are not sending them out in the grade schools or the high schools. As adult Christians, we are not targeting the children and youth in our neighborhoods through typical youth ministry. So the question is, how do we reach out to non-Christian children with non-Christian parents? Because we need to talk about how to disciple our own children, but if you stop there, you have no idea what the Great Commission is.

It's other people's children. Okay? So how do we do that? We can't just cloister in our homes. We just can't say, well, we've got our family okay.

That's not what the Gospel is about. So, again, here's the question. How do we reach out to non-Christian children with non-Christian parents? Now, notice the order.

How do we reach non-Christian children in order to reach non-Christian parents? My answer. I do not think that this is a biblical question. Now, why? And I'm going to read again.

In the New Testament, I do not see Christian children reaching out to non-Christian children in order to reach their non-Christian parents. This is what I see. I see Christian parents reaching out to non-Christian parents in order to reach both them and their children.

That's what I see. Now, another point. These sub-points are very important.

We must have respect for God's order of authority even in the unbelieving family. Never go outside the father and mother's authority. You go after somebody's child playing in the neighborhood, and you go up and talk to that child, begin doing things with that child without the consent of their parents, I think you have violated some serious biblical principles.

I was in Ireland last year preaching, and this young man who had come from the U.S., and I didn't think he was very stable in his way of doing things, but he was kind of tagging along. And I came outside of the pastor's house, and this man was sitting there, and he had just taken it upon himself to gather these children in this kind of project area and start talking to them about Christ and witness to Him. All of a sudden, a lady flew out of that house just angry.

She said, who gave you a right to talk to my children about anything without my permission? Now, she was not a Christian by any sort of shape of the word, but look at what had happened there. She was right. Now, I want to say something.

We might not be wolves, but we need to be careful that we do not use the tactics of wolves. Do you understand what I'm saying? Be careful of going after someone else's children. Be careful of sending your children to someone else's children.

We need to evangelize, but we need to look at the way it ought to be done. Now, I was out in California recently. I was talking to this fellow from Asia, and he mentioned something, and I'd like to get it documented.

I haven't yet, but I'm going to try to. This is what he said. As we all know, in South Korea, there was a move of God, and probably the denomination most affected by that move of God was the Presbyterians.

Amazing growth. This is what he told me. It was his opinion.

The Presbyterian church is so strong in South Korea for this reason. When evangelism started decades and decades ago, almost all the evangelical groups went to children to do children evangelism, and they based their entire ministry upon the children. The Presbyterians, and understand this now, I'm Baptist, the Presbyterians, what they did because of their view of covenant and family, they went directly to the male.

They went directly to the husband and the father to do the evangelism. I think that's maybe an important point to think about. Do you see though how important this is? I want you to answer a few questions.

Do we send our children to do a job we will not do? Almost all the people that I talk to that say, well, we're just sending our children into this because we believe they ought to be lights and all this. I go, what are you sending yourself into? How are you witnessing? How are you seeking to be a light? Another question. Do we send unconverted children to be a light to their school? Come on, that's what's being said.

Do we send unconverted children to be a light to their school? Now how are they going to do that? Now, here's another thing my wife brought up last night. If we study the casualties of war on both sides of the

fence, how many children are won to the Lord by sending immature, uninstructed, and often unconverted children to win them, and how many children are lost in Christian families because they have been sent? Do you see what I'm saying? But now here's something. We're homeschoolers, a lot of us.

We don't need someone to coddle us. We don't need someone to tell us everything that's right about us because not everything's right about us. If you're going to be serious about protecting your children, nurturing them, teaching them the Word, until they're converted and they become soldiers of Christ and they can go out and fight the battles, if you're going to be serious about that, you've got to dedicate your life to their training.

Second of all, you can't wait 20 years for them to repeat the same process because still you haven't gone outside of your family. We as men, once again, have to determine how we as men are going to go out and fight the battles. How are we going to go out and evangelize other men? And this is the funny thing.

Almost all missionary movements, methodologies, evangelistic campaigns and everything target women and children. Is that not true? Because it's more difficult to reach the men. Maybe it's difficult because we men are not being men and we're not rising up to evangelize men.

We want to talk all day about manhood, authority, headship and everything. Then if there's a battle to fight, we're the ones that need to lead it. If there's evangelism to be done, we're the ones that go out there.

We don't send our little daughters, our little sons into a public school without even being converted or instructed or anything else to be a light to the community. We are the light to the community. And some of the best ways to do that is this.

I know it's not going to sound very... It's not like street preaching or anything, which is a good thing, I do that. But one of the greatest impacts you can have on a family is to invite them into your home. You say, well, they might what? You know the scariest thing for me, a nightmare for me? For me to walk into our church ten years from now and everybody looks like a homeschooler.

There's nobody there with tattoos running down the side of their face or 14 earrings in their nose. That would break my heart. I love the things I've learned about homeschooling and everything else, but I came out of that kind of mess because someone went into that kind of mess and shared the Gospel with me.

I want my children protected. I'll tell you something. I invite lost family into my home.

My children will be protected. That's my house. But I am not going to forsake the world just to have my house clean.

Remember, where there are no oxen, the stall is clean. But you can't plow a field without oxen. You can make your house pretty.

You can be Victorian in all that you do and everything else, but if you're not reaching out to the little girl that I met on the plane a few weeks ago, a young lady about 30 years old with tattoos running down the side of her face, down her neck and everything else with her hair all cropped up really strange. If you're not bumping into those kind of people and pouring out your heart to them and pleading with them to come to Christ, then what is the goodness of all your cleanliness? We are to be a people reaching out. Reaching out.

So men, Roy Hargrave said this one time. Someone asked him a question. Are you against evangelism? He said yes and no.

He said, I'm against your kind of evangelism. Unbiblical evangelism. But no, I'm not against evangelism.

Men, if we're going to be serious about our families, we have to think how are we going to reach out. If we're going to say that we're not going to send our children into the battle, we have to go into the battle. And we need to figure out how to do it.

We need to figure out how to do it. This is one of the problems with the Reformation. You have to work it out.

Once you get all these really good doctrines and you set things up and build principles, then you've got to ask yourself, how does this really work in real life? I know I've really hit hard, but hey, I only had a few minutes and you're men, you can take it. Guys, I plead with you. Find joy.

Find joy in pouring your life into your children, into your sons and daughters. Disciple them. Wrestle with them.

Take them places. Make them work with you if possible. Oh, just bring them into you, into your life, and pour your life into them, please.

I beg you. I beg you. Don't miss the joys of that.

One of the reasons I come here is because, oh man, I just get so excited when I see other men doing things with their children, things I've never thought of. I'm like a little boy. I just run up to them and say, okay, I just saw you do this.

Tell me about it. Or you just said this in your sermon. Okay, I want to know what... Because I'm not an expert.

And that's why I come here, and I hope that's why you've come here. Do youth evangelism and discipleship. Yes.

Do it in a biblical way. Let's go to the Lord in prayer. Father, I come before you, and I ask you to use this, Lord.

Use this to bless your people and advance your kingdom. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Paul Washer also discusses this topic in a brand new, high-quality documentary entitled, *Divided*, which follows the story of a young filmmaker searching for answers to what has happened to his generation in the church. Additionally, for a comprehensive treatment and exegetical study on the subject of reforming modern youth ministry, read Scott Brown's latest book, *A Weed in the Church*. Both can be found at ncfic.org forward slash store.

A Weed in the Church

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/paul-washer/reforming-modern-youth-evangelism-and-discipleship/>

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