

Parenting - Is It Controlled Chaos?

by Shane Idleman

Parenting can be a chaotic and confusing experience, but by focusing on the blessings, acquainting our children with the Scriptures, and simplifying childhood, we can create a more peaceful and loving home environment.

Duration: 50:45

Scripture: Psalm 127:3, Proverbs 22:6, Matthew 6:34, Ephesians 6:4, Colossians 3:21, 2 Timothy 3:15

Topics: "Christian Parenting", "Family Discipleship"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of parenting, highlighting the need for intentional and consistent guidance based on biblical principles. It addresses the challenges parents face in a chaotic world, the significance of disciplining children with love and wisdom, and the impact of parental influence on children's well-being and future. The message encourages parents to prioritize their relationship with God, invest time in teaching their children the ways of the Lord, and make necessary changes to strengthen family bonds.

Transcript

The message this morning is parenting. Parenting, is it controlled chaos? Here's a mistake some of you are making right now, but I'm not a parent. Those days are over.

Or I'm not yet a parent. Well, you are an influencer. So this message, every single point is going to be applicable.

I've had people tell me, tell me when the series is over I'll come back to church. Like, well, no, no, it doesn't work that way. We can glean from the Word of God.

We can glean from what the Bible says. And I'm not going to tell them when it's over. They're going to have to find out themselves, right? In a chaotic and confusing world, let's get grounded for a minute, okay? Parenting doesn't have to be controlled chaos.

What I've noticed is when our lives are out of control and chaotic, so is our parenting. It's directly related to how we are doing spiritually. Now, this has been, public confession, this has been one of the hardest sermons for me to put together in a long time.

Because I just got slapped in the face on every verse. Oh, Lord, please, Lord, please. Because you want to be, and there's something we miss.

When you come away from things like this, saying, God, I really felt beat up maybe, or I've got to work on these things. That can be a good thing. Because woe to the person who says, I've mastered this.

I'm not convicted by prayer. You know, Shane, I don't need to pray more. I don't need to be a better parent.

Then you're in trouble. So it can be a good thing saying, Lord, I need to work on this area. Then we work on it.

Too many people get, well, gosh, that was hard to hear. I feel beat up, and now I'm just going to go grab a few bottles of wine. And just not fix the things that need to be fixed.

So use it to propel you in the right direction. So I actually have a lot to say, as usual. And not a lot of time to say it.

I don't want to turn this into part two. I'm just going to read Scripture. They'll be up on the screen as well.

And we're going to get through this. Psalm 127.3. This is where I wanted to start. Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb, a reward.

And I've underlined some things that I want to pull from this. Children are a gift from God in a society that really minimizes kids. Have you ever noticed that? The world's view? I mean, if you have more than one, you're frowned upon.

When I tell people sometimes, four kids. Oh, my gosh. You know what causes that, right? I mean, how did you...? I'm like, four? Really? Have you ever researched history? That's like actually not very many.

But the world's view. In society, when abortion's an epidemic, the value of life of children is going to be minimized as well. So you have to remember this.

Christians, we have to remember that they are a gift, a heritage to leave to the world, to leave to society, to make a difference. God's gift to you. You shepherd and raise that gift, and you allow that gift to go in and be a heritage, be a voice for truth.

But here's a practical application on this point. I'm going to try to have a practical application on each one. Focus on the blessings and not the difficulties.

I have to remind myself often, focus on the blessings, not the difficulties. See, if you're not a parent, this even applies. Young adults in the audience, even those in the balcony, this is for you.

You don't have to focus always on the difficulties, always on the challenges. We're supposed to renew our mind and get them back on the blessings of God. If you just think of how blessed we are in our nation, and in your homes, you will reorganize and reprioritize your thought life.

Because an attitude of thankfulness, bitterness doesn't grow in that. Unforgiveness, anger doesn't grow in a thankful attitude, in a thankful heart. This also is a good time to remind you that parenting is not like a microwave.

It's a crock pot. Right? My wife just threw something in a crock pot the other day. It was great, actually.

And I looked at it, and I was like, this isn't doing anything. It's been two hours. But it's on slow, right? Six hours, eight hours later.

And sometimes we think, you know, this book, I want to be careful, though. I don't want to criticize. I mean, maybe it was great.

I don't remember what it said, but a new kid by Friday? Or something? I'm like, hmm. I mean, that's probably good principles in there, but be prepared. It might not happen by Friday.

It might be over the long haul. And I've seen a lot of times God's grace in this area because families who are just chaotic, and I feel bad for them. And some are close to me, and I pray for them.

But they have this child that's just an angel. It's like, wow, God's grace is on that child. And then you see other families trying hard and bringing in the Word of God.

And then one of the kids is not really an angel. And we think, well, what am I doing wrong? So you have to also remember that it takes time, and the seeds you plant will come to fruition. That God will honor His Word.

And I would rather be the family that has a difficult child, and you're in His Word doing what it says, than the family who's not, and somehow this child is being perfect. Because that's an exception, not the rule. And anytime there's an exception, there's a rule.

The rule is adhering to godly principles. Number two, 2 Timothy 3.15 Paul's talking to Timothy, noting that how from your childhood, Timothy there, you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. So from your childhood, you have been acquainted.

See, that's an interesting word. That's why I wanted to highlight it. This isn't just throwing a Scripture at somebody.

Acquainted means relational. He's been acquainted with the Scriptures. Not only has he heard them, he's seen them lived out.

And one of my great challenges is not to just quote Bible verses, but to see the verses lived out. To go to your children and say, you know what, I was wrong in this area. Daddy shouldn't have did that.

Mommy shouldn't have yelled like that. Please, let's pray right now. And you see it lived out.

They see you giving grace and mercy. They see you living it out. They're acquainted with the heart of Christ and the Scriptures.

Now this word actually means to make someone familiar with the Scriptures and the application. This is why, and we really try to get this point home, church, what we offer, if there's a youth ministry or a Juana on Wednesday or the children's ministry next door, that has to be supplemental. Do you know what supplemental means? Have you heard the word supplement? You go to the store and you buy some supplements.

Vitamins, right? Just make sure they're not heat treated. No fillers, no binders, and all natural, okay? But a lot of those are junk, so I'm trying to get this in there a little bit. So be careful.

But you take something that's supplementing. I'm not getting quite enough at home, so I'm going to get a supplement. And that's what the church should be.

It should only complement what is going on in your home. Because if we just drop them off and hope next door takes care of them for an hour and a half, and now they'll be grounded, now it doesn't work. And just a personal opinion here.

Many books have been written. Studies have been done. You've probably been hearing this for 20 years.

Why are kids leaving the church like never before? And it's a great list of things, and I agree with many of them. But at the heart of that is they don't want the Christ they see in us. So we send them next door to learn about Jesus.

Then we take them home and they don't see the Jesus they learned about. And when they're not acquainted with the Scriptures, when they're not... You can ask my wife, our prayer is God, let them have a passionate, meaningful relationship with You. And help me just point them in that direction.

Invest in them. So it does involve apologizing to your kids. It does ask for forgiveness.

I made... I hope she's not in here. One of my daughters cried last night because I forgot to give her a hug, but I gave the other two. Is she here? Oh, I'm sorry.

That's embarrassing. Let's edit that out of the text sermon. But I felt bad all day this morning.

And I see that it's parenting. Are you acquainted with? Are you acting like Christ? Can you apologize? I apologize. I need to work on that area.

And I love them so much in each different ways. But see, my dad, they know you're not perfect. Who are we trying to fool? They're just going to think I'm this perfect pastor.

My parents are flying to New York to be on Fox News. And my dad writes books. And he should be this perfect... But no, no.

See, I'm flawed. I need Christ. I ask for forgiveness.

I need Christ. I need Him every day. I need to devote my life.

I need to humble myself. Every day they see that. That's what they remember.

They're not going to remember respect your parents. Respect your parents. See, right here in the commandments.

They want to see the character in order for them to respect. So acquainted with the Scriptures. And I'll probably have to apologize again for bringing that whole thing up later.

But the more you know the Scriptures, the more you know Christ, and the more the kids know Christ. So here's the application. I have not perfected this area.

I'm actually frustrated in my own home because I'm getting too busy and have been too busy. And this week, I'm going to continue to take some serious inventory of my life and start a list of, okay, Lord, what are You calling me to do? Because all these things are coming in that's not necessarily You. And I need to

put up some boundaries and I need to get back to these things.

Because first and foremost, is my relationship with the Lord. It's loving my wife, raising the kids, and then, Lord, what have You called me to do? If those things start to get interrupted by things that aren't of God, that's when we run into trouble. And that's what I feel sometimes and I notice.

So I haven't perfected this area. I'm working on it. Pick one point for the week and teach on it.

That's the practical application because I look in my office and I go, systematic theology. Oh my Lord, where do I even start with these kids? How about what is sovereignty? Or God is love. What does that mean? Just pick a topic.

And just show them that week what it means. What it means. Years over, you've got 52 things you've covered with your family.

So what is mercy? What is grace? What is God's love that week? So when one of the kids gets in trouble and they came and they told me the truth, I'd say, you know what? Here's what grace looks like. Here's what's mercy. You're off the hook.

That's what God does when we bring our sin to Him. See, all this wonderful application, if we allow it to penetrate our own lives and our own hearts, it's a good time to remind you too, we don't throw Scriptures at people. We use them.

Can we throw? Can we quote? Oh, we can quote. We can quote Scripture. But we have to use them in a powerful way.

The third point. Matthew 6, 34. Oh, all the verses are from the English Standard Version of the Bible.

This one is from the... Oh, it has it up there for you. This one is from the New American Standard of the Bible. And people do ask me this quite often.

What translation? Why the translations? This is a side note. If you go to our website and put in there what translation is best, I spent about an hour breaking down where they came from. The majority of them are trustworthy.

You know, the ESV, New American Standard, New King James, and different things. But that's just a side note from the questions I keep getting asked of me. So, do not worry about tomorrow.

Oh, my goodness. Is that you? I mean, this week, I was a worry wart. Right? Right under that story about Vegas and dealing with all that is that darn guy in North Korea now has something that can hit California.

I'm like, oh, I didn't see that. I mean, part of me is like, can it be just off LA a little bit and sitting right here so it's just gone and there's no pain? You know, and you rustle with that. But do not worry about tomorrow.

Now, I'm going to bring this point home in just a minute for parenting. This is really impacting me this week. Don't worry about tomorrow for tomorrow will care for itself.

Each day has enough trouble of its own. Worry to allow one's mind to dwell on difficulties or troubles. That's why I want you to be very cautious.

An area I didn't do well this week. Very cautious on what you allow to enter into your mind about Vegas and what's going on in the world. Because it's either promoting worry or it's promoting God's sovereignty.

Years ago, I thought of, if I could do it, I would do it. Maybe this is a good idea for you. Somebody start a news page.

All it is is the positive stuff. Good news from Las Vegas. People are being saved and set free.

And you've got to offset that because we were not designed to absorb all that. I know I've said this before, but it's perfect with parenting because here's what's happening. What we are allowing into our homes, this fear, this anxiety, this worry, we are then transmitting into our kids.

An eight-year-old does not need to worry about what's going on. Proverbs 12.25, Anxiety in the heart of a man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad. See, if all we're getting is the anxiety, all we're getting is that, what happens? It begins to weigh, begins to push, begins to depress, and that's where depression comes from.

But a glad word, a positive word, what does God's Word say? Because you can hear about North Korea, what does Psalms say? I am the Lord thy God, no nation will stand before me. What is a man to me? God actually says, let the nations know that they are but men. I hold the king in the palm of my hand.

I mean, it's just, amen is right. I mean, that should, and then I read that, I'm like, that's right. That's right, who am I? And then you go back out in the world, right? And then you go into the world, and you're like, oh, I'm so depressed.

And then you come back, and you go, that's right, who are you? You've got to constantly remind yourself and your kids, I wouldn't have any kind of stuff at home that's negative, right? All the, with the holiday coming up, avoid the skeletons, and the witches, and the warlocks. It's like, what is that? I mean, I just see it in Home Depot, or it's like, oh, I just don't like that. It doesn't sit well with my, you know, with what's in here.

It's just this dark, demonic, oppressive things, and they have skulls and stuff, and graveyard things on their porches, and I'm like, Lord, help us. But I'll get out that rabbit trail, don't worry. So will you, and I want to ask this right now, even about Facebook too, will your post build people up? Will it encourage? Will it unify? Will it unify an already divided nation? Because what you're posting, what you're feeling, what you're talking about, you transmit that into your home.

Our kids become little mini-me's. Right? Minions. They feed off of what they're hearing.

So here's what, and why I made this point, and stayed here for a minute. I came across a great article. Jennifer Lauer, I think you shared it.

And it was, I had to read it three times. And just ponder, because this is finally somebody saying what I've been feeling, and I didn't know what to do with these feelings. But the article is entitled, Simplifying Childhood May Protect Against Mental Health Issues.

And it talks about kids were off building forts. In my age, making bows and arrows, collecting bruises and bloody knees, and having the times of their lives, they were immersed in childhood. And then something stood out.

There was this person they interviewed by the name of Kim Payne. They volunteered in refugee camps where children were dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder. Kids seeing their parents get killed.

Shot. Dead. On the streets.

He described them as jumpy, nervous, and hyper-vigilant. Wary of anything novel or new. Have you ever tried to get a dog that's like that? No, they're afraid.

And so these kids were like that. But years later, Payne ran a private practice in England where he recognized many of the affluent English children were displaying the same behavioral tendencies as the children living in war zones halfway around the world. Why would these children living perfectly safe lives show similar patterns? He explained that although they were physically safe, mentally, they were also living in a war zone because of the influence of their parents on them.

They're not ready to handle North Korea. And terrorism. And the shooting.

And you just keep bringing that in with the negativity. We're going to hell in a handbasket. Is that gun safe full? But our prayer cloths are empty, right? Is the thing down in the basement ready? We got enough food for a year? I mean, if you've got to pack enough food for a year, I mean, you might as well... We're creating this culture of fear, and I don't see that as biblical.

Now, be prepared, of course. You have enough water just in case there's an earthquake. You prepare, but you also encourage.

Hey guys, God's sovereign. God's in control. And you're the encouraging force.

So what it boiled down to, they were privy to their parents' fears, their parents' drives, their parents' ambitions, and the very fast pace of their lives. The children were busy trying to construct their own boundaries. So instead of being children and allowing them to be children, we bring into, especially if you hook them up on the media, and it's hard, right? I need a two hour break.

Just go sit and watch that thing. But then what are they watching? What are they hearing on the news? What are they hearing from us? Too much stuff. Too many choices.

Too much information. And going too fast. That's what's happening.

That's what is hurting our children. Because none of that is biblical. None of that is biblical.

They went on to say soccer, music, martial arts, gymnastics, ballet, baseball. We schedule play dates with precision. We have everything scheduled.

You've got to be here, got to do this, got to be here, got to do this. We fill every space in the rooms with educational books, devices, and toys. The average Western child has in excess of 150 toys at one time.

With so much stuff, children become blinded and overwhelmed with choices. So what happens? We add our stress into their world, and they can barely cope as it is. Now I'm just throwing this in here, okay? Don't get upset yet.

Now if we throw into that what I've talked about before, unhealthy food choices, the colorings, the dyes, the preservatives, the junk that doesn't help their body, the caffeine. They're giving kids caffeine? At four,

five, six, seven, eight? Their little bodies can't absorb that. So you're putting in all this junk, and the body can't run efficiently.

It's already coping with the stress. And then we add on them the stress of our lives. You can see why there's nervous breakdowns, why there's attention deficit disorders, why there's all these things.

Now of course this isn't a blanket statement saying, oh, Pastor Shane throws all that underneath this blanket. No, but the majority of it is we are causing things to happen in little bodies. You know, 40 pounds.

40 pounds, and we're throwing on them the fears and the challenges of life, and they cannot cope. They will have nervous breakdowns, panic attacks. Have you ever used the word meltdown? A meltdown is a child having a panic attack.

Now some of that's natural, I know, but how much of that is self-created? Now if it's getting a little convicting, welcome to my world all week. Because you realize that I believe I'll get to the Scripture in a minute, like arrows in the hands of a mighty warrior are our children. We're supposed to shoot them out into the educational field, into the government field, into the religious field.

Shoot their arrows, precise, marked arrows to make a difference for God. And we are called to instruct and train a child in the way they should go. To be able to filter certain things.

To be able to slow down the pace of life. Let them enjoy life. Go out and be a kid.

I'm bored. I don't care. Find something to do.

Do something and get creative and you encourage this atmosphere that is godly, it is positive. Because really, should they be fearful? I mean, if we're teaching God sovereignty, if we're teaching God's in control, we've got to be able to show it in our own lives as well. So here's a few areas of practical application.

Say no. Be purposeful about what you're doing. Say no to things.

It's okay. Not being so busy. Because here's what I noticed.

Being in construction, real estate, corporate executive with 24 Hour Fitness, and I got caught in this big time. Somehow, this is entry to the church. The busier you are, the more successful you are.

Oh man, that guy's so busy. He's so busy. I'm so busy, man.

I'm so busy. Real estate agents, right? So busy. I'm so busy.

I'm so busy. Accountants, I'm so busy. I'm so busy.

I'm so busy. Oh man, I'm so busy. Working 60 hours, I'm so busy.

So now, so busy is successful. And that's not what the Bible says. The Bible actually says, slow down.

Teach us to number our days. Put God first. Your family.

Prioritize. And don't live according to the world. Because let me tell you right now, that busy train doesn't slow down.

It's gaining speed. And gaining speed. And even in the church, like we think, people tell me, well, Pastor Shane, you're so busy.

Don't use that word. Selective. Maybe I'm trying to not be busy.

Because busy sometimes has this... God forbid you take a few days off, you spend time with your children, take them to the zoo, teach them the Word of God. Oh, that's not... That's lazy. No, that's godly.

Because you're taking time and you're using it correctly. Because the enemy will use busyness because the busier you are, the less productive you are on the important things often. A busy person will not read the Word of God very often.

A busy person will not go to church as often. They will not listen to worship as often because they're busy. Going here, doing that.

They get caught into the flow of the world system. Slow down. I would encourage you disengage from electronics more often.

Disengage the kids. Disengage your grandkids. Disengage them from those things more often.

I know they make a wonderful babysitter, but they also make a terrible influencer. Don't vent your fears and frustrations at home with your kids. There should be a sense of calm and safety.

Now, I believe as we're training them, you prepare them. They just can't go out into the world. Oh my Lord, I didn't know it was like this.

My dad painted this picture of utopia. You just kind of gradually shape. Okay, here's where there's evil.

And at some point you have to talk to them about the marriage, gay marriage issue and why does it happen. And you give them back to love and grace and what the Bible says. But there's a process there.

So I want to throw this out there. Why are we busy bees? It's important because a parent who's busy is not effective in raising their children. If we're too busy.

Now, there are seasons in life and seasons we work through. But I think as we prioritize and we downscale, it will help. But here's the main reasons.

To escape reality. Right? Same reason the alcoholic grabs a drink. He's good for a few hours.

But then when that next day comes, here it comes again. So we escape the pain sometimes. We escape the reality.

We are amped up. Number two, that's why we're busy. We're amped up on not taking care of our body and consuming things that just do nothing but amp us up.

Number three, to appear successful. We can't say no. We don't want to appear mean.

As a result, others will run our lives. So just be careful in this area. Yes, it will be hard.

But many battles worth fighting are hard. And I ask a question here. Who runs your home? Who runs your home? See, the seven-year-old who's running your home now will be the 17-year-old who's destroying

your home later.

You know, sometimes parents, we become butlers and maidens. Or maids, yeah. You know, when it's not that design, distraction has always been a tool of the enemy.

So the fourth one. Proverbs 22.6 Train up a child in the way they should go. Even when he is old, he will not depart from it.

And I really wish I could have focused a lot of the sermon here because people get confused sometimes. Shane, I trained up a child in the way of the Lord. And they departed from it.

What happened here? Well, there's a lot to this. Number one is when it comes to Scriptures like this, there are parameters. Train up a child in the way they should go.

Even when he was old, he will not depart from it. Meaning that there is a season maybe where they depart. But because of what you invested in them, the anchor you secured them to at a young age, they have something to go back to.

I know in my case, when I drifted away, I came back to that training that was earlier in my years. So we don't know what God is doing in their lives. We don't know what He's going to use because most kids will rebel.

Shane, how do you know that? Because you did. We do. Rebellion's in the heart.

Especially it's pent up in the heart of a child to rebel. Say don't do something, it's going to be done. And there's this time of testing.

But train up a child also means to teach through practice and instruction over a period of time. So, back to what I said initially, I wonder how many people who think they're training, aren't really training. They're just quoting Scripture.

And if they're not living it out, they're not training. The child has to see by example the love of their father. Example the love of their mother.

Not just quoting Scripture. I say that because I know people who just quote Scripture. They'll yell it as if it's got more authority than.

Oh, just kick that up a volume. Now they're going to listen. And then the Word of God becomes offensive to them.

The best way to use Scripture, some people might disagree with this, but it's this. If I've got somebody, I've got a child, the people I'm talking to in Vegas, not once did I quote Romans 8.28. Well, you know what? All things work together. For good, for those who are called.

I mean, this is not good timing. You know, and same thing with our kids. And have them, many times they'll ask, well, what does the Bible say? Or what does God think? Well, I'm glad you asked.

Let me see. Now you're positioning it. Now your verse is just this bludgeoning, this tool.

Now granted, this is different from teaching in the evening or morning or whatever. And you're teaching, you're going through. This is when you're using it skillfully.

Not to hurt, but to help. And the wrong training is not good. Too busy, too tired, too lazy.

And we fail to do this. Drastic change requires drastic change in you. Here's the hard part about a message like this.

Most of us would agree. Say, yeah, boy, that's some good points there. And that's about where it ends.

Because hearing, it's easy. It's in applying it that the rubber meets the road. And as grandparents, maybe talk with your kids and say, hey, here's what I'm thinking.

Here's an area I'd like to help in. Psalm 127.4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. That's what I quoted earlier.

Arrows are sent. They are precise. They are targeted.

You know, I've been going through this all week and I even skipped over it just now. I don't know. I'm going to go ahead and read it.

I don't want people to feel too much conviction, but then again, I do. Because sometimes it's hard to change if we don't. But I've read this many years ago when I did a men's conference and I was traveling speaking at men's events.

And there's some statistics about when men are absent in the family. And the reason I'm talking about this is what we talked about last week is the man is the primary, I believe the primary influencer in this area of spirituality in the home. As the man goes, so goes the family.

And as the family goes, so goes the nation. Now we have wonderful single moms and wonderful wives that are taking the role in this area and doing what they can, but when you get the man involved, you see dramatic differences. Actually, 63% of all youth suicides are from fatherless homes.

90% of all homeless and runaway children are from fatherless homes. 85% of all children who show behavioral disorders come from, you guys are getting it, right? 80% of rapists, 80% of rapists motivated by misplaced anger come from, because they need to see how that man treats a woman. They need to see that man value and respect and impart life into their son.

70% of all high school dropouts come from fatherless homes. And this page is about this long, but I'll spare you. Here's a mistake we're making right now.

Yeah, that's bad for the inner city. I feel bad for single moms. But leave here remembering this.

You do not have to leave your home to be an absentee father. You do not have to leave your home to be an absentee father. You can be absent emotionally.

You can be absent spiritually. You can be absent in other areas. Present, but no influence.

Present, but the media's got your attention. Present, but the television is your mistress. Present, but you're always gone.

You're too busy. See, you don't have to leave home to be an absentee father. If you're absent in the areas that are most important, these statistics will ring true in our own lives.

Proverbs 5.12. This is number 5. I'm about ready to open up a can of worms. For the Lord reproves him whom He loves as a father the son in whom He delights. We have to talk about this area for a minute.

What is a reproof? A correction. It's a correction. So, your kids need to go in that direction.

They're going in this direction. If you don't reprove them, what do they continue to do? Go in this direction. So this is where the topic of punishment comes up.

Uh-oh. And as much as I wish I could dedicate a whole sermon to all these topics, this one would require a whole sermon because the reason, I think if you talk to different lawmakers and things that are spanking and different things, what happens is there are abusive homes, and they've got to correct those abuses. And the way to correct them, there's different ways to do that, but they often, in correcting something, they go to the polar opposite.

And they say nothing about this aspect of disciplining a child. And a parent who loves their child sees the need to discipline because an undisciplined child will become a monster as a teenager because you're shaping, you're forming. Have you ever seen a kid go into the military and come back? What happened? They were disciplined.

That will was broken. And that's what parenting involves. It means to correct, to reposition.

And God disciplines us, right? There's not a switch off the almond tree, but there's a loss of a job. There's not a spanking from heaven. Where did that come from? But there's financial collapse.

Where did that come from? And God will discipline us in the same way. Proverbs 13.24 Whoever spares the rod hates their children. But the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them.

And this is funny because it goes back to study the Scripture. What does rod mean in the Hebrew? Nobody bothers to look at that. All these websites.

Oh, the Bible's recommending get out a club. Baseball bat. What's the word rod mean? Well, all you have to do is what they call law of first mention or how is it mentioned elsewhere in the Bible? What's the root word? Genesis 30.37 The same word is used.

It means a twig from a poplar tree. Jeremiah 1.12 It means a branch. A little branch.

A twig from an olive tree. Or an almond tree. So it's something there.

And that's why the tush is a little padded, right? For that. And I have to be careful because people try to get me in trouble. Right now what I'm about to tell you, but I want to tell you the truth.

That biblically speaking, the children, there needs to be some type of discipline. What that looks for your family, you can talk about it, but there has to be something, some way that the child fills the pain for what they've done. And what they've done will, if they're not filling the pain, they're not being shaped and molded and trained.

Now some people say, I'll just take away their phone and that'll be punishment. Well, I don't know. Is that working? And you have to go through this with your spouse because if men are prone to anger, then I would redirect somewhere.

If a person can lovingly discipline their child and not cause any damage, but a little bit of, oh, okay, then that's their role. And I would, if there was a sermon, I could break it down a little bit more. But in this area, there has to be some type of discipline.

That's why I said earlier, a seven-year-old who runs the home will be a 17-year-old who destroys the home. If they're chaotic and without boundaries and without discipline, now that doesn't improve. Boy, you can hear a pin drop in this service.

Wow. So I don't, here's my danger. My struggle is, if I say too much, parents might take that as a license to go beyond a healthy discipline.

If I say nothing, then some parents will continue to do nothing. So take it to the Lord. What's the best thing? But I want you to know the Bible recommends not a rod, but a little switch.

Ow, that hurt. And it's gone in 10 seconds. It's something where they have to, when I went to Bethel Baptist, many times I'd be like, okay, and it was this paddle, this long, with holes in it.

Bam! Oh! And three times. You know what dawned on me? This is interesting. For talking, or chewing gum, or making noise.

Those are the top three problems in the school, the schools 30 years ago. Now there's sexual abuse, rape, robbery, weapons. Look how far we've drifted as a culture.

And my point was, I didn't chew gum in class anymore. Right? Oh, boy, I still remember that. There's a big German teacher from, yeah, a big German teacher from Germany.

Whew! My goodness. But see the point, right? And so there has to be, and that's part of the problem, why we're seeing, go ask a school teacher. I feel for them.

It's like, they tell me, Shane, it's like a zoo. A zoo. And I'm going to be careful here on the language, but Charles Swindoll, I think, told a story, talked to a public school teacher in the 70s, I think it was, who got out of it to raise her kids, and then came back into it 30 years later.

And she went from, it used to be, good morning, Mrs. Johnson, to dropping F-bombs and calling her certain names. In 30 years. Let that sink in.

See, there should be a righteous indignation to say, okay, not on my watch. I can't change the world. I can't change this community, but I can change my home.

Or I can help to change the home of my grandchildren. Well, Shane, they don't listen to any of this. You can pray, you can fast, and have God move and have them seek your advice and be able to help in this area.

So the whole point was, for the Lord disciplines those He loves. When we don't discipline, I'm not saying a parent doesn't love, I think a parent is fearful. I think something's happening there, but there has to be some type of discipline or that you're doing damage to that child.

Number six, Deuteronomy 6. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart and you shall teach them diligently to your children and you shall walk in them and you shall sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise. So here's what we should be doing.

Teach to place something into their mind morning, noon, and night.

Speech or speech is seasoned with grace. Wisdom and humility. At work, it means they used to take the kids into the field obviously and kids were more involved in the work of their father often or the mother in doing things.

But there needs to be a time before the media or before just sending them out somewhere, have a time where the family, and this is a big challenge for me, I know the enemy's coming in and trying to stop a lot of this, but you have to get to where it's morning, evening, noon, sometime where you begin to corral them in and begin to teach them the Word of God. And these words that I command you today, you shall teach them. What are the words He commanded? The Scripture right before that.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. That's what we teach them. What does that look like, kids? Let's pray that you're going to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

And they're not going to all sometimes be there and be cooperating, depending on the age, but you still pray, you still contend. And even before that, I the Lord God am one, O Israel. Teaching the nature of God, the character of God.

And then number seven, Ephesians 6.4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Colossians 3.21 adds, Fathers, do not provoke your children lest they become discouraged. This was interesting as I studied it this week, because to irritate, to provoke, you know what that is? Have you ever found a rattlesnake? And you get a stick? That's the image.

So fathers, don't provoke. Don't do this to your children. I also looked up an article on the suicide epidemic.

It said most teens who have been interviewed after a suicide attempt say that what caused the teen suicide are feelings of hopelessness and helplessness. Suicidal teens often feel they're in situations that have no solutions. The teens can see no way out but death.

The teen feels like they have no control to change their situation. So see, here's how the kids are feeling. The parents are to go into that and address those feelings.

And bring them worth. Show them there's not hopelessness. Be able to encourage into the Lord.

They don't provoke. See, if we're provoking and provoking, we are actually contributing to the problem. We're supposed to go in and be change agents, not provokers, to go in and say, hey listen, hopelessness, how are you feeling? And talk with them.

And build them up and build them up because the enemy of your soul, of your family, the cat is out of the bag. The enemy is coming to kill, to steal, and to destroy your family. That's the main focus often.

The sanctity of marriage, the sanctity of life, the family unit. He's coming after all of that. Also, it was interesting, this word provoke.

Don't discourage them. It's parents who are never satisfied with their performance. Did you ever have that dad or that mom? If you had, just done better.

Why didn't you get an A? Why didn't you stop that ball? Ooh, let's get, ooh. So the person who should be investing into them the most, is actually discouraging them the most. Now this is going to be a message that you're going to want to listen to a few times.

I would slow down. I would listen. I would shed some tears.

I would put on worship. I would pray. And let this impact your life.

Send it out. Get this out. Because here's where we are losing the battle.

This is where things are collapsing at the home. And why it's collapsing, as I feel it just like you do, it's hard. Isn't it? I come home.

The last thing I want to do is open the Bible to four kids who do not want to hear. Well, three, three, three. Right, three.

I don't want to pray. I want to go out. I want to go play Minecraft.

I want to go... And, oh, you know what? I'm exhausted. Go for it. So I invest, or you invest, all this energy in people or things when God says, no, use a lot of that energy to invest in things that matter.

So I personally believe the most freshest times in your day, when you have the most energy, are those the times you spend with God. We often give him the late night, 20-minute read-in real quick, when he should get the... D. Martin Lloyd-Jones wrote a book, Preachers and Preaching. He talks to pastors.

He said, the most important... He said, first, guard your mornings. Safeguard your mornings. And he said, whenever you are the freshest, the most alive, give it to God.

And then from that, give it to your family. And then from that, give it to others. But what do we do? Others and everything else.

Because we're chasing the almighty dollar. We're chasing the things that never... I've spoken to so many people over the years. I talk about a story in one of my books of a man who was on his deathbed.

And he couldn't speak anymore. He could only write. And the tears were just coming down, regretting that he spent all of his life focusing on the things that do not matter.

And his children now, they're grown, trying to comfort him. It's okay, dad. It doesn't matter what's in the bank account.

It doesn't matter what your position was. See, those things at the end aren't going to matter. If you take from this and you slow down your life, you reposition, you'll be thanking God that you did that.

That you brought everything back into focus. Don't preach to them. Live it out.

But here's the challenge. Our challenge is we hear how we are failing, and we'll say I'll do better, and we don't sometimes, right? We beat ourselves up. I have been for years.

God, I want to do better. I want to do better. I also want to encourage the single mom, or the single dad, or those who are just in a hard spot right now and they've got to put work first.

And they're trying to get through this. If you seek God with the right heart, you'd be amazed what God does with humility. I've seen God open tremendous financial doors.

Like, oh, wow, I can change this. When you start to honor Him, when you start to honor His Word, and seek Him, He will open doors. He will rebuild.

He will restructure. If a single mom has kids, I need help with my kids. We have men that can help to mentor.

We have these things available. So here's just a key takeaway. Reprioritize.

It will not come without a struggle. You will be amazed at what God does with humility and repentance. Another paragraph I've been going back and forth all week about reading.

Because my struggle has been this. My heart is to encourage. I mean, dads are beat up.

My heart is to encourage. And let's get back on track. I also don't want to avoid the realities of life.

A young girl, she wrote, I think it was focused on the family, devastated by the choice her father made to leave her family for a younger woman had a nightmare following his announcement. She dreamt that she, her mother, and sister had all died in a horrific car accident. When she told her dad about the dream, he sympathetically replied, I'm sorry to hear that.

I'm glad it was only a dream. Her response was shattering. She said, Dad, right before we hit through the window, I saw that you were driving the other car.

I know four families right now this could be applied to. Right now. Right now.

Today. Christian. Fortunately, this man broke, he repented, and worked to restore his marriage.

Some of you hearing this now and hearing this later, men and women, we have to wake up. Is this what we are doing to our families? At some point we need to take a look in the mirror. Because we can be encouraged, oh yeah, it sounds great, I need to do that.

And nothing changes. So the key takeaway really is difficult changes are going to be difficult. Get ready to fight.

Get ready to put first things first. Get ready for your kids to not be supportive. I found out there is a little black box hidden behind a couch.

It has a little Ethernet thing that goes into it. And if you accidentally just unplug it a little bit. Just unplug it.

Oh, what happened? I think the Internet is down today. I don't know. What are we going to do? It works.

It works. You've got to be creative. And you've got to fight that.

Give the family your energies. Now some of you can't. For me it's hard.

I come home exhausted sometimes. But there can be a way if you start to take care of your body too. Feed your body what it needs.

Take care of it. Energy. Exercise.

And you become whole. Body, soul, and spirit. Then you are able to give more efficiently to your family.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/32/SID32005.mp3>

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/ypFp0D9QX8A.mp4>

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