

Part 4:

Big Idea

This week, Pastor Larry Stockstill gave us some amazing thoughts on raising “kids that turn out right.” He based his teaching on the parable of the Prodigal Son, which Jesus tells in Luke 15:12-22. Using this story, Pastor Larry gave us three keys to raising children well: attention, authority and affection. We must intentionally give proper attention to our children, which means spending quality time with them, participating in their hobbies and interests, monitoring their relationships, and prioritizing a family night. We must also establish our place of authority in our children’s lives, which involves holding them accountable by setting boundaries and following through with consequences. Allowing our children to experience consequences will build their character. Finally, we must show our children affection by affirming them, reminding them of their identity in Christ, speaking life over them, telling them we love them, and embracing them often.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.’” - Luke 15:20-22

Discussion Questions

- Share what you learned about attention, authority or affection from the way you were parented? Which one of these areas are you really good at and why? Which of these areas needs the most work and why?
- We learned that one aspect of authority is applying consequences when our children fail to do what we asked them to do. Talk about the most effective consequences that your parents used on you and how you apply those to your children.
- Rejection is the biggest problem in this country today and the opposite of rejection is affirmation. Discuss ways you affirm or encourage your children when they are experiencing the sting of rejection.

Prayer Focus

Ask God to give you wisdom to know which area of parenting you need to give the most attention. Pray that God would help you steward the gift of your children well, and thank Him for being an attentive, authoritative, affectionate Father. Ask Him to protect and bless your children, and pray that they would have favor on their lives and be used to glorify God. Be sure to pray with your kids every day!

Next Step

Identify a specific way that you want to grow as a parent during this season of your life. Identify someone of the same gender in your small group or community who is strong in that area of parenting, and make plans to meet with that person this week. Begin to take small, intentional steps to implement that aspect of parenting into your family.

Leader Tip

Identify those in your group who have leadership potential. Invite them to attend Small Group Leadership Training, held at Dream Team 401. Also discuss, determine, and register your Serve Day project this week.