

THE JOY OF PARENTING

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What is arguably...

- ...the most difficult job in the entire world,
- ...with the most influence on society,
- ...for which no one receives any formal training or guidance,
- ...and yet most people try to do it anyway?

P _____

Genesis 1:28

“God blessed them [Adam and Eve]; and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it....’”

Genesis 9:1

“And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.’”

Psalms 127:3

“Behold, children are a gift of the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward.”

A. There has been a Seismic Cultural Shift

1. Throughout most of history, children were considered as an _____.

“The more children we have, the more we can afford.”

2. Today, children are considered as a _____.

“How many children can we afford to have?”

3. Replacement birth rate

_____ children per childbearing woman to maintain a stable population

4. Projected (2025) Filipino Fertility Rate =

_____ children per childbearing woman

B. Parental Purpose

1. The _____ is the primary context for the spiritual formation of your children. (Deut. 6; Psalm 78)

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

“These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.”

Psalms 78:4-7

“We will not conceal them from their children, but tell to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and His strength and His wondrous works that He has done....that they should teach them to their children that the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, that they may arise and tell them to their children, that they should put their confidence in God and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments.”

2. The Church cannot and should not take that _____ away from you.
3. The Church can and should _____ with you by providing encouragement, accountability and resources.
4. Every study available indicates that **parents** have the **most** _____ in the lives of their teenagers, for better or worse.
 - a. On academic performance
 - b. On avoidance of crime and substance abuse
 - c. On financial and economic success
 - d. On faith formation
5. Smith and Adamczyk wrote in ***Handing Down the Faith*** (2021) "...the single, most powerful causal influence on the religious lives of American teenagers and young adults is the **religious lives of their parents**. Not their peers, not the media, not their youth group leaders or clergy, not their religious school teachers."
6. The good news: In the context of healthy relationships, teenagers tend to embrace the _____ of their parents. (Prov. 22:6)

Proverbs 22:6

"Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it."

7. Teenagers are far more likely to embrace their parent's faith if they enjoy their parent's _____!

8. A strong relationship with parents is vital to a strong Christian faith. (Eph. 6:4)

Ephesians 6:4

"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."

Psalms 16:11

"You will make known to me the path of life; in your presence is the **fullness of joy**; in your right hand there are pleasures forever."

9. The recommended adult to teenager ratio for healthy development and adjustment through adolescence is 5 to 1.
10. When asked, 75% of teenagers said they really wanted adults in their lives who actually cared enough about them to listen to what they have to say.
11. Lifeway Research from 2018 shows that 66% of 18 – 22 year-olds who attended church at least twice a month dropped out and stop going to church when they left home.
12. The dropout rate rose to 88% for those who had no adults investing in their lives.
13. Parental involvement in the lives of their teenagers was one of the strongest indicators of preventing this from happening.
14. Parents not _____ church was a strong predictor of dropping out.
15. Fathers _____ in church is predictive of teens staying in church.

16. Parents _____ in their church was a strong predictor of teens staying in church.
17. Parents who regularly _____ spiritual things with their teens was a strong predictor of teens staying in church.
18. Parents who _____ together with their teens was a strong predictor of teens staying in church.

C. Parental Calling

1. To Instill a:

- a. Love for _____ (Eph. 6:4)

Ephesians 6:4

“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the **discipline and instruction of the Lord.**”

- b. Love for _____ (Col. 3:21)

Colossians 3:21

“Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will **not lose heart.**”

- c. Love for _____ (Luke 6:31)

Luke 6:31

“Treat **others** the same way you want them to treat you.”

2. The Great Commandment

Matthew 22:37-39

“‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

D. Parenting Styles

1. Authoritarian/Autocratic – “I must _____ my child.”

Authoritarian/Autocratic parents often end up with children who rebel against authority. These children often come to distrust others, frequently act out in anger, engage in power struggles, and maintain cold distant relationships.

2. Permissive/Indulgent – “I must _____ my child.”

Permissive/Indulgent parents often end up with children who lose respect for authority. These children often come to believe that the world revolves around them, and that if you ignore, whine, argue, and manipulate enough, you can eventually have your own way.

3. Democratic/Authoritative – “I must _____ my child.”

Democratic/Authoritative parents often end up with children who submit to their loving leadership and other forms of authority. These children usually have a healthy self-image and demonstrate warmth, love, mutual respect for others and conflict resolution skills.

Mark Twain said:

“When I was seven my father knew everything. When I was fourteen my father knew nothing. But when I was twenty-one, I was amazed how much the old man had learned in just seven years.”

E. Never, never, never give up!

1. Parenting is the toughest job you'll ever have. You can't _____ and you can't retire.
2. You don't have to be _____ to get the job done.
3. Don't _____ your children to be perfect.
4. Give them back to God and then _____ them.
5. Be _____ when it is time for them to go.
6. _____ for your children
– Protection, Provision, Holiness, Blessing, Peers, Attitude, Future Spouse, Career

F. Parental Joy

James 1:2-3

“**Consider it all joy**, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.”

3 John 1:4

“I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.”

“If children were nothing more than a gift for this life, a single-minded focus on our children's happiness and success might make sense. As long as the family's frantic schedule secures a spot for the child in a top-tier university, forfeiting intentional spiritual formation for the sake of competitive sports leagues and advanced placement classes would be understandable—if children were a gift for this life only...But children are far more than a gift for this life. They are bearers of the gospel to the generations yet unborn.... How we mold our children's souls while they reside in our households will shape the lives of children who have yet to draw their first gasp of air. Your children and mine are also eternal beings whose days will long outlast the rise and fall of all the kingdoms of the earth...If our children become our brothers and sisters in Christ, their days upon this earth are preparatory for the glory that will never end.”

Timothy Paul Jones,
Family Ministry Field Guide, 2011.

G. Help is Available

1. The Center for Parent/Youth Understanding – www.cpyu.org
2. Axis – www.axis.org
3. Plugged In – www.pluggedin.com



gccp.org.ph

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