

SERIES: FAMILY ON PURPOSE
PART 1: BRINGING OUT THE BEST IN YOUR KIDS
(AND EVERYONE ELSE)

When it comes to the growth, strength, health, support, and continuation of the human family, the marital dyad, the father and mother are most critical and then the children that come from that union. If couples don't reproduce, humanity will become extinct. Because of the proliferation of abortion since Roe vs. Wade, the U.S.A and many other nations are not reproducing at the level they need to in order to thrive. So, my series is of utmost importance to every one of us, whether you are married or not. Whether you have children or not. Actually, today's teaching is Part 2 to what I started on Father's Day. But I am calling it Part 1 anyway. If you have not listened to my Father's Day teaching with the same title, I encourage you to go online and listen to it, or you can print out my script. Listen, church, parenting is one of the most important and most difficult relationships you will ever have. Elizabeth Stone writes, **"Making a decision to have a child is momentous. It is to decide forever to have your heart go walking around outside your body."** When I first heard that quote, it paralyzed me. It is so true. The dynamic this quote emphasizes is that there is a great joy seeing your strength in your children lived out in front of you, and it is traumatic to see your dark side walking around your house and then out into the culture. This is why today's teaching and the skills I am teaching you are so important. Fathers, mothers, single adults, single parent, and all adults and young adults, it is

each one of our responsibility to bring out the best in the kids in our lives and everyone we come in contact with. What is good parenting about? Our job is to raise godly people who love God, who know how to love others like they have learned to care for themselves. Kids who have a heart to share their love for Jesus with others. A person who thrives in living in relationship and community with others. A child who becomes an adult who influences others to live their lives for Jesus. To do this we must cultivated independent, happy, courageous children who choose to live their lives for Jesus and His purposes. How do we do that?

If you will look at your notes, I have put on the first two points that I addressed on Father's Day. I will just review quickly. **I. Accept each child's uniqueness**

We looked at: **Two enemies that diminish and distort your child's uniqueness:**

A. Comparison: It creates hurtful competitiveness

B. Conforming: It creates a people-pleasing pattern

II. Affirm their value constantly

A. Teach why they are so valuable

1) God custom-made you

2) Jesus died for you

3) The Holy Spirit lives in you

B. Three ways to affirm your child's value:

1) Visual attention. Matthew 10:30 MSG

2) Physical affection. Hosea 11:4 TEV

3) Verbal appreciation. Isaiah 43:5

III. Trust them with increasing responsibility

Nothing brings out the best in your child, your spouse, employee, or anyone else you relate to faster than when you communicate that you trust them by delegating authority and telling them that you trust them. Jesus said the way you help people grow is by putting trust in them by giving them responsibility so that they can become response-able, able to respond. Responsible simple means you are able to respond. If you never give your child a chance to respond by learning to make decisions and experience their own successes and failures, how do you expect them to become responsible? The leaders we have grown up around here have done their best learning by on-the-job training. Yes, I believe in reading, going to seminars, webinars and online learning, but when it is all said and done you simply have to dive in and start serving, start leading and start learning. In Luke 16:10-12 Jesus models three ways we help our children and others grow.

A. Trust them with small things

Luke 16:10 Jesus says, **“If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones.”** From the very beginning, you start with your kids very early, and you start small, and you start giving your kids responsibilities before they can even talk. You give them tasks like picking up their toys after they play with them. When Kathe went back with Whitney to help Benjamin and Kelsey with Brady and Olivia Jane, Whitney videoed Kathe teaching Brady to put the balls back that he had been playing with. He was only 17 months

old, but he demonstrated that he understood. Then just this last weekend I had the privilege of face-timing Benjamin and his family, and he panned onto Brady who was in his playroom, and it looked like a hurricane had hit it. I said, “Is it about time that little guy learns to put his toys away?”, and he laughed like that could be some time away. I thought to myself there is no better time than now. I did that with our kids. You start with small things so they can learn what stewardship is. It will benefit them as they become adults and enter the workforce. I can see how it has paid off for both Benjamin and Whitney. Teaching them how to be trustworthy in the small things of life like bodily hygiene, chores, cleaning up their room, putting their clothes away is how you practically teach them to internalize integrity and being responsible.

B. Trust them with possessions and money

The Bible calls material possessions and wealth, worldly wealth. Jesus says in Luke 16:11, “**And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven?**” Jesus says God watches how you manage your money to see if He can trust you with weightier things and spiritual authority and responsibility. This is why we offer our Financial Freedom seminar every year, because how you handle your stewardship of finances and material goods is a sign to God if you can be trusted with more. Parents, it is your responsibility to teach your children how to view finances. You must teach them what God says about finances. My father taught me to tithe beginning at 9-

10 years of age. That is one lesson that I took to heart, and I have been tithing over 55 years. You could not get me to stop. I have been so blessed. CVCHURCH, our church has been incredibly blessed because we're a giving church. I can't wait to tell you what we have given last fiscal year with the increase God has given us. We are investing over 30% of that increase back into Kingdom purposes by blessing and investing in all kinds of other ministries. Your hearts will jump for joy at our next VISION DAY, which will be held in November. If you are not tithing and giving over and above, you have incredible blessings to look forward to as you start. You must model this for your children and teach them as soon as they get their allowances and money starts coming to them. You're teaching them how to set themselves up before God to receive a life full of blessings from Him by teaching them to be responsible with worldly goods.

C. Trust them with things that don't belong to them

You teach them to be trustworthy with things that don't belong to them before you give them their own. Before you get your own guitar, let's see how you handle someone else's guitar. Before you get your own car, let's see how you handle someone else's car. People who excel at parenting—excel at leading, realize that people respond to responsibility, and if you want them to become responsible you must give them the opportunity to be response-able by giving them the opportunity to do wrong. God does this with you all the time. *(Tell story about when I worked at my brother-in-law's father's Shell gas station.)* I gave someone who says they had

no money \$50.00 out of my boss's till. He said he would bring me the money back. You know the rest of the story. When I told my boss what happened, he said, "No problem—your check will be short \$50.00." I never did that again. I was not being trustworthy with my boss's money, and God taught me an important lesson at 16 through Mr. Berg, who I deeply loved. You never get fired for making a mistake, but you will get fired for making the same mistake over and over. Luke 16:12-13 says, **"And if you are not faithful with other people's things, why should you be trusted with things of your own?"** ¹³**No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."**

IV. Correct without condemning

We all need correction at times, because we're all imperfect. We are all sinners. We all have a natural tendency to do what we want to do instead of what God wants us to do. Proverbs 3:12 says, **"For the Lord corrects those He loves, just as a father corrects a child in whom He delights."** Notice the Father doesn't correct you out of anger or the desire to hurt you. He corrects and disciplines you because He deeply loves you, and He wants to make sure that your character defects are attended to. His correction is meant to restore you to wholeness. Fill in your notes, please, where it says, **"Punishment = Penalty for the past - No! Discipline = Correction for the future – Yes!** All of God's correction is to help shape in you the correct attitudes that ultimately shape

your future. Your attitudes are responsible for all that you have in your life right this moment. If you don't discipline and correct your child, the Bible says it proves you don't love them. Proverbs 13:24 says, **“Those who spare the rod of discipline hate their children. Those who love their children care enough to discipline them.”** Proverbs 19:18 says, **“Discipline your children while there is hope. Otherwise you will ruin their lives.”** How do you do this with your children?

A. Avoid correcting with anger

Anger is devastating for children and for adults who have been raised in unsafe environments. If you're angry, you need to wait before you correct. It is wise to take time and cool down. You don't want to correct when you're angry. You know if you're angry if you are sarcastic with them or you call them names or you speak to them in a way that is shaming, embarrassing and meant to humiliate them. This breaks a child's spirit and causes them to either withdraw, or they become aggressive and can start acting out. Ephesians 6:4 says, **“Father's, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.”** It might feel good to you to yell or speak harshly to your child, but when you correct in anger, you're demonstrating that you don't truly have their best interests in mind, and you are simply creating resentment in them. You simply create anger in return, and it will actually harm your relationship. Anger sown reaps anger. If you get angry at your kids,

they're going to get angry at you. If you're negative with your kids they're going to be negative with you. Disciplining in anger is simply getting even. You can scare people into doing almost anything. Through anger and fear you might be able to change a person's behavior for a moment, but you're harming the relationship, because they will remember and feel your anger and resentment, and it will come back to haunt you. Avoid correcting in anger. Correct, discipline and instruct with love because you truly want what's best for your child.

B. Choose your words carefully

Of all the times to be the most loving, precise and thinking through what you want to say is just before you choose to correct, discipline or instruct your child or anyone. You must choose your words carefully, and, loved ones, this is true all the time. The Bible says that words are powerful. They can give life or destroy. They can create joy and happiness or sadness, hurt, resentment, and anger. Ephesians 4:29 says, **“Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.”** Paul instructs us that every word that comes out of our mouths is to be wholesome.

V. Love them fiercely and unconditionally

How do you love fiercely? How do you love unconditionally the way Johnathon Edwards did? Here are two truths that will

have a profound impact on your children and those who you relate to on an ongoing basis.

A. Forgive them

Loving fiercely means you learn to offer forgiveness and to ask for forgiveness and to accept forgiveness to learn to treat yourself with respect, value and care. You live in a spirit of forgiveness. Do you want a good marriage? I can tell you, I've been married for 41 years, and this December will make it 42. Being committed to forgiving your spouse and choosing not to harbor anger, resentment and bitterness, and choosing not to withdraw, pout and hold things in are leading keys to a great, joy-filled marriage. If you're great at forgiving, you'll have a great marriage. If you have a hard time forgiving, you have a hard time letting go, then you're going to have a hard time in your marriage. A good marriage is the union of two great forgivers. You must learn how to ask for it quickly and to give it as quickly as you can. The more you learn to forgive the less you will let hurt into your marriage. Hurt is like anger—it gives the devil an entry into your marriage and your family. The problem with too many people is they feel entitled to feeling hurt and then making everyone else's lives miserable. That, to me, is a form of evil, because it truly messes up the lives of the children in your household. Ephesians 4:32 says, **“Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.”** Your children will learn to forgive or to hold grudges, get angry, withdraw, become aloof—from what they see in your home and between you and your

spouse. Dads and moms, whether you're a single parent or not, they learn how to and how not to forgive from you. The key to forgiving is to make sure that you're admitting your own faults, weaknesses and hurts to Jesus and receive His healing and forgiveness. Then be ruthlessly honest about your own hurts, and walk through the steps of forgiveness. If you are not sure what those steps are, I have spoken on forgiveness almost every year. Look on our website and listen to those videos. It is really a matter of life and death in relationships and teaching your children how to forgive by watching you forgive them and love them fiercely.

B. Never give up on them

When you love someone fiercely you never, never, never, never, never, never give up on them no matter what happens. That's real love. Romans 5:8 says, **“But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.”** He died on the cross for every human being knowing that many will choose to reject Him and choose against Him, but He didn't give up on them, and He went to the cross on their behalf. 1 Corinthians 13 is one of the greatest definitions that we have on what true love is. Paul writes about the quality of Christ's love in 1 Corinthians 13:7, **“Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.”** The truth is we all have failures. Every one of us have a deep-seated need to know that we have people in our lives that so believe in us and are so committed to us that we know that, regardless of what happens in my life and regardless of what

I do to them or to others, I have people in my life that absolutely refuse to give up on me. Loved ones, this is the kind of love, that fierce love, that your child needs from you as their parent. There is a security that comes to your children, to your spouse, to your friends and for you, when you know that you won't give up on people and they won't give up on you. Yes, we have to set boundaries when people are acting out and they abuse your boundaries and you—that doesn't mean that you have given up on them. I have had people who have betrayed me, and I have had to hold my ground, but when they have recanted what they have done, I have been able to be there for them, because I have made a commitment to not give up on people. I need some of you not to give up on me. This is how you love fiercely and unconditionally. There will be people who choose hell because they have rejected Jesus. He still loves them fiercely and unconditionally. But they have chosen against Him.

As we close this morning (afternoon), have you realized that these five attitudes and behaviors that your children and those who relate need from you are the five attitudes and behaviors that Jesus Christ has towards you? Jesus Christ accepts your uniqueness and loves you completely. He affirms your value. He demonstrated that by dying on the cross for you. He trusts you with increasing responsibility—that is why He has given you your talents, gifts, skills, and spiritual gifts. He wants you to use them for His Kingdom purposes. Through His Word and your daily devotions, your small group, people in this church, and through His Holy Spirit, He is continually disciplining, correcting and instructing you without

condemnation and judgment. He loves you daily, fiercely and unconditionally by forgiving you every time you sin and that He never gives up on you.

Let's pray.