

The Centrality of Faithful Parenting

Gen. 18:16-19

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I. Introduction: *The Noble Savage v. Faithful Parenting*

In today's intellectual climate, there are two paradigms at odds regarding how we are to think about kids. These two paradigms that meet with us on every side are that of the 'noble _____', and that of faithful Christian parenting. On the one side, you have the 'noble savage'; it is the idea that civilization corrupts man; that the lonely individual untouched by human society is a paragon of virtue and goodness; and that this individual—or, this *child*—is corrupted by the older generation. If we would just let children grow up uncontaminated by our old ways, then they would be good and pure and perfect—or so the argument goes.

As nice and cherubic as this sounds, it's actually the exact _____ of what we are tasked with. It is the exact opposite of what we as parents are commissioned by God to do. It is _____ to the extreme, and as such, it will certainly bring upon our head—not the blessings of God—but His indignation.

II. Text: Gen. 18:16-19

16 Then the men rose from there and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them to send them on the way. 17 And the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, 18 since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? 19 For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."

III. Shema (Deut. 6:1-9)

What God revealed to Israel, Israel was to keep themselves and instruct their children in the same, so that the promises of God might be established upon them. And this is *still* how it goes. The older generation is to keep the revealed way of the Lord, instruct the newer generation in the same, so that the newer generation might walk in faithfulness, and the Lord establish His covenant blessings upon us.

IV. God's Redemptive Plan

The Lord promised Abraham that through him the world would be redeemed, and this redemption is carried out by the faithfulness of each generation passing on what God has entrusted to mankind once and for all. This is how God is making all things new. And this is why the Christian family is central in God's purposes of redeeming all things.

This is how the Lord is _____ the world, and should it surprise us that the world is absolutely bent on stopping us? God has decreed salvation for the world through the faithful, generational transmission of the what He has revealed to His people, and this God-hating world wants us to stop. But it's all a _____. Mankind is not autonomous. Our children do not prosper if we simply leave them alone to find their own way. Children are meant to be taught—that's why they were given _____.

V. Faithful Parenting

This is the responsibility set upon us, and it is weighty. We cannot give into the lies of those around us, for we serve not men, but God. And God is kind. God desires to bless us and our children. He has revealed these things to us so that we would faithfully teach them to our children, so that He might bless us and our kids with His covenantal blessings.

1. Teach your kids about God.

We are to teach the next generation about the living God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Triune God who has revealed Himself decisively in Jesus Christ. Christian schools, as well as the Church, are good _____ to assist parents in this work; but it is not first the responsibility of the Church or of teachers, but this is first the parents' responsibility. Parents are always responsible for wisely leading and directing their own kids into a sound understanding of the faith delivered once and for all to the saints.

2. Set your kids an example worthy of imitation.

The best way to undo a good theological education is by combining it with a _____ life. We do not want to be hypocrites; for one, they dishonor God; and for two, they cause others to dishonor God (Rom. 2:22-24; 1 Cor. 4:15-16). Parents are to set an example for their kids so that when they grow up and move out, they will know clear as day what it looks like to be a godly husband, a godly wife, a godly father, a godly mother, a godly worker, a godly boss, a godly congregant or elder. How will they know this? Because they grew up with the living example in their dad and their mom. That is the _____ inheritance you can give to your children.

3. Teach your kids how to deal with _____.

While parents are to imitate Christ, they will, nevertheless, fail at points. But Christ is not just our example—He's our _____. He did not just come to show us how to live before God; He came so that we might be freed from the guilt and damnation that comes with our failure to do so. We live in a world that has no idea how to deal with sin. But if Christians know anything, we know how to deal with sin. Jesus calls us to bring it to Him.

4. Teach your kids how to worship the Lord.

Mankind was made for an end beyond oneself, which means that we need to be taught how to fulfill our purpose. We were made for God, but God is beyond us. We come out of the womb made to worship God, but not knowing how to worship Him. We have to learn this. God has revealed it to us, and each generation has to teach the next. This means parents are to teach their kids to participate in _____ part of our worship service, as they are able. Some things our kids will absorb by simply being around it. But other things will take parents' diligent and regular instruction.

VI. Conclusion