

Discipleship: The Heart of Parenting

Hope for Parents

I. Three Encounters with God

A. Nicodemus

Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3

B. The Samaritan Woman

But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. John 4:23

C. Timothy

from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 2 Timothy 3:15

II. Faulty Sources of Hope

A. Family Identity

And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. Matthew 3:9

Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. 19 For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. Romans 5:18-19

Passages Requiring Interpretive Precision:

1. Peter's Invitation

"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." Acts 2:38-39

- Notice the call of repentance and baptism
- Notice that the promise is for all who are far off

- Notice that the promise is for those whom the Lord calls

2. Household Baptisms in Acts

he will declare to you a message by which you will be saved, you and all your household.’ Acts 11:14

And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us. Acts 16:15

And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” Acts 16:13

Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. Acts 18:8

- God certainly often works in entire families to bring salvation
- God certainly can save children
- To claim that these household revivals provide a promise that all children of Christians will be saved seems to go beyond the intention of the texts.

3. Proverbial Promises?

*Train up a child in the way he should go;
even when he is old he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6*

*Whoever is slothful will not roast his game,
but the diligent man will get precious wealth. Proverbs 12:27*

- The Patterns of Proverbs are Warnings to be Heeded
- The Patterns of Proverbs are encouraging but not absolute

B. External Success in the Early Years

On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ 23 And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’ Matthew 7:22-23

C. Comparison

The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. Luke 18:11

III. The Danger of Faulty Hope

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own understanding. Proverbs 3:5*

A. Parental Pride

- 'My children's character is the result of my training or example'

B. Parental Condemnation

- 'My children's sins are the result of my training or example.'

C. Parental Anger

- 'My children's sins are the result of their unique and abnormal stubbornness.'

D. Spiritual Disillusionment

- 'My children's sins are the result of God's failure to live up to my expectations.'

IV. Trustworthy Sources of Hope

A. God's Patience

The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, Exodus 34:6

B. God's Grace

for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. John 4:23

C. God's Power

It may be that the Lord will work for us, for nothing can hinder the Lord from saving by many or by few. 1 Samuel 14:6

D. God's Generous Mercy

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. Matthew 5:43-45

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Romans 5:6

E. God's Word

- *Psalm 19:7-11*

- *from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 2 Timothy 3:15*
- *Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation 1 Peter 2:2*
- *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 2 Timothy 3:16*
- *so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it. Isaiah 55:11*

F. God's Gospel

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. Romans 1:16

V. Applying our Hope

- Prayer
- Seeking Transparent Representation of the Lord
- Teaching the Word
- Focusing on the Gospel