**Autumn School: The Disciple-making Parent (Week 1)**

Purpose: connect parenting and evangelism. Based on The Disciple-Making Parent by Chap Bettis

*What’s the difference between Christian parenting and non-Christian parenting?*

1. **The Great Commission and Families**

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’ (Matt 28:19-20).

*Does the great commission apply to parenting? How?*

Disciple = devoted follower of Christ. Making disciples, through conversion public commitment to Christ in baptism and teaching them is something parents are to do. Why not?

Battlefield: culture; our children’s hearts, Satan.

We cannot be half-hearted and complacent about this

*Do you think of your children as eternal souls destined for heaven or hell?*

*What is your concept of good parenting compared to the world’s?*

*So many young people grow up Christian homes do not follow Christ in adulthood. What does that provoke in you?*

1. **Parents are the primary teachers and disciple makers**

**Scripturally**

These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. (Deuteronomy 6:6-7)

Fathers (parents), do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4)

if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves whom you will serve… But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD. (Joshua 24:15)

(Psalm 78:5-7, Proverbs 1:8, Joel 1:3)

I need to decide to serve God in the parenting of my children, instead of serving myself, instead of serving my children (in wrong sense), instead of serving others

You discipline, you seek to be good parents, so they are secure and realise God is good and his ways are best.

You want them to honour and obey you because you want them to honour and obey God.

*Scripture puts the primary discipleship responsibility on the parents. Do you agree or disagree? What implication does that have for your life?*

**Statistically**

“no one has more potential to observe and influence your child’s spiritual growth than you… research in the sociology of religion suggests that the most important social influence in shaping young people’s religious lives is the religious life modelled and taught to them by their parents.”

1. **How to be a disciple making parent?**

**A Joyfully priority**

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth” (3 John 4).

You might make superhuman sacrifices for their children’s improvement and enjoyment. These are god things, but they can become god things.

*Where does discipling my child fit with the other priorities? Do you need to repent of idols?*

**Confidence and realism**

“All authority… I am with you

However, the perfect environment will not guarantee that my children follow the Lord… you cannot control your children or their outcomes

The **ultimate** goal of my Christian life cannot be to have my children follow the Lord but it should be the **primary** aim as a parent

You haven’t failed as a parent if they do not become Christians – saving people is God’s work. But if this is not your primary ambition for them and what you devote and direct your energy towards, yin prayer and action you are not really acting out a biblical, gospel shaped way of thinking.

**Together**

You cannot do this alone: sympathetic family, Christian friends and the church.

*How does church fit in your plans to disciple your children?*

**Progressively**

2 Tim 3:15-16 and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. **16**All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness (2 Tim 3:15-16)

Younger: learning

Older: becoming convinced.

Don’t disengage at this vital time!

12 was significant year in bible and in development

understanding and awareness of God begins to grow

Observant of adult interactions and hypocrisy.

Questions about the faith start troubling them. The attractions of the world seem quite enticing and the Christian faith can seem restrictive.

Not less conversation, more but less lecture and more questions asked and answered with patience

Need to talk with trusted “uncles and aunts,” mentors in the faith.

Conclusion: the goal of parenting:

We want our children to

* Have a heart for God as a Christian
* Have biblical convictions and wisdom
* Understand and participate in the spiritual struggle
* Understand and interact in a Christ-like way with his/her culture
* Be prepared for life… Adult, independent; sociable, responsible; kind; contented; respectful; progressively leaving home