**Autumn School: The Disciple-making Parent (Week 4)**

1. **The power of apologetics**

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15)

* Your child will have doubts – we all do!
* Young age: Stat: 40% Years 6-8 (but might not express those doubts to us)
* Encourage, invite questions, accept the challenge
* We teach them *what* to believe
* We teach them *why* to believe
* Prepare them not just with truth but with answers to the main questions, or they might be bowled over by them

*Teeth cleaning experiment. If never exposed to false ideas (cleaning is bad) we are easily swayed.*

*If told truth aggressively without critique some swayed become vehemently opposed*

*Conclusion, re-enforce truth (don’t assume) and expose lies (don’t ignore)*

* Doubts about the truth of Christianity. examples:
  + Why is it reasonable to believe in God? Can you provide evidence? (e.g. design)
  + How do we know that Jesus really existed? How do we know that we can trust the Gospel?
  + Is Jesus God?
  + Did Jesus rise from the dead?
  + Is Jesus really the only way to God?
* Doubts about the goodness of Christianity
* In giving commands
  + His rights as owner
  + His goodness in understanding what is best. Our children are born naïve (Proverbs 7:7), often deceived by the nature of sin. They see only the pleasure that sin offers; they don’t see the consequences. Sin does have pleasure for a season. (Proverbs 20:17, Hebrews 11:25). The world, while highlighting that pleasure, hides the consequences of sin. Our job as parents is to unmask the deceptiveness of sin.
  + The temptation of pornography; premarital sex; living together; drugs; consumerism; idolatry
* **In the loving rules about singleness and marriage**
* Wanting a mate is reason some young Christians desert their faith

1. You may be called to singleness.
2. You can only marry another believer.
3. Living together has spiritual, emotional and practical consequences

* About 50% over 16’s married. 12% cohabiting: they are less likely to marry and more likely to divorce

*How does the media focus on the pleasure of sin without focusing on the consequence? How can you counter that message with your children?*

* In suffering: why is there evil and suffering?
* Why are their good people who are not Christians and hypocrites who claim to be Christians
* Church is full of hypocrites so I can dismiss my need of and duty to the local church

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. (John 10:10)…

*Ask them if they believe that? What might life to the full look like?*

*Matthew 7:24-27 is about the wise and foolish builders. Talk about the time delay with sin and its ultimate consequences.*

*How can you cast a vision for saving physical intimacy for marriage?*

*How can you cast a vision for the blessing of singleness? Ask your children if they will commit to following Jesus even if they remain single.*

1. **The power of friendships**

The righteous choose their friends carefully, but the way of the wicked leads them astray. (Proverbs 12:26). Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm. (Proverbs 13:20). See also Prov 1:8-19; 1 Cor 15:33-34

* We want to encourage God-honouring friendships

*Experiments in peer pressure. Holding up 2 cards with an obvious answer which one matches. With 3 people planted to give wrong answer 4th will after a few turns do the same*

* As Christians we are obligated to extend to every person unlimited acceptance but not unlimited close friendship
* Our children will have friends
* When they are younger we have an influence: we can’t decide but we can give options/opinions
* We can’t critique all their friends but can be there to support and explain when things go wrong
* Get to know their friends
* They will be tempted or saturate...
* tempted to love popularity more than Jesus...
* tempted to fear other people’s disapproval more than that of Jesus.
* Point out that we are commanded not to be intimate friends with non-Christians.
* We are commanded not to be in fellowship with those who call themselves Christians but don’t act like it.

1. **Pleasing God with media and arts**

**Drowning in Entertainment and Electronics**

* a pilgrim people passing through, incarnational enjoying sanctifying world we inhabit
* We can affirm and enjoy the positive aspects in each culture.
* We can adapt to the neutral aspects in each culture.
* We can resist and denounce the evil aspects in each culture.
* Model how to master media yourself.
* Treat media as a privilege not a right and thoughtfully introduce privileges at appropriate times.
* Guard the gate for content – who wants an open sewer in their home?
* Make family relationships a priority over electronics.
* Talk about Internet temptations.
* Have the courage to pull the plug.
* Find like-minded families.

**Enjoying art and culture – especially popular**

* Talk about the power of the arts to capture and shape the heart.
* Talk about the power of the arts to create celebrities.
* Talk about decoding the arts to take every thought captive.
* Talk about music, lyrics, videos and lifestyles of popular singers. Ask what they know. Ask if it matters. Talk about how music influences us. Ask whether this is the kind of person they want to be
* For series/films etc. Establish family standards with explanations. In our family, we settled on three standards: “Not bad,” “Not around me,” and “Not at all.” Don’t snoop but don’t ignore. Never assume your children have good judgment about what to watch!

1. **Recap and discussion**