

Last week, we examined and laid out for you the five stages of training and teaching your child. As you know, we have held up here in Proverbs 22:6. It is such a powerful verse that leads down so many roads that we really want to look at it and try to get everything out of what we can. I told you I thought it was an excellent time with all of the activities that we have with our children, and the children that are being born, and our young children, to really help everybody get on board with where the Bible truly lays it out.

We started it, and we have been moving along through this for a couple more weeks, and we will probably finish it up. Last week, I told you how in your child's physical growth, you want to go through five stages of training and teaching your child. What I did was take a complicated subject that would be almost impossible to grasp, looking at all the pieces of it, and simply broke it down into five sections for you as they grow through life. I told you that they overlap. The ages of children vary as to what they are up to, but I gave you two key words. I gave you the aspect to teach, and that is to lay down the rules of life that you have for them, and then you set a pattern of discipline. Then I talked about the aspect of to train. Training is reinforcement of the commitment to your children and what you are teaching them and what you are giving them.

I. The Importance of Reinforcement

In raising up your children, reinforcement is absolutely, incredibly vital. In war, when you have battles and you have two opposing armies, when they go up against each other, when you put your battle plan together, you will realize that you never commit all of your troops to any particular battle. If you are a company of four platoons and you are going to go into a battle, you will send in three platoons; you will keep one company in reserve. If you are in a bigger battle and you are a battalion of four to six companies, then you will keep one battalion back in reserve, and then you will send everybody else in. So at a time in the battle when things need to be shored up, you have reinforcements that you can commit to the battle. When the enemy sees in the battle that you are bringing in reinforcements, he knows that you are serious on your plan to win, because you are going to commit more troops. More troops obviously mean more casualties, and you are sending a message to him that you want to win this so bad that you are now bringing in the reinforcements to bolster up what you are doing to make sure that you win. It leaves no doubt in his mind what he is up against. He is up against a determined army who has now committed their reserves and committed their reinforcements to reinforce the battle from their side.

It is the same way with your child when you teach them and reinforce your teaching. Reinforcement is a vital key. When you start to discipline your child, then through a process of reinforcement, your child knows that you are serious about the battle that you are in with them. When you discipline a child on any level, the whole reason for that discipline is reinforcement. Just disciplining them and giving them what is wrong and what is right is fine. But if there is not a reinforcement to show that child that you are really committed to this, and this is something that we are going to stay with for a long time, then the parent's job is to find ways to do that.

I have told parents before, it is a simple thing, and I remember it from my days in school; probably older ones will too, as they do not do it anymore. But I have told parents over the years that when you have a child that has a particular issue with something, I know when I was in school, in grade school and in junior high, when we screwed up and talked in class or when we clowned around in class, before you went down to the office to meet the principal, you got a little assignment. I remember it well, you had to write out a thousand times, "I will not talk in class." I remember that. That is why I do not talk much anymore. I remember that like it was yesterday. You know what that one thousand times of writing it out did for me in my talking or goofing around? It reinforced it. Every time I wrote it, it was reinforcing something that I knew that I had to change in my life, and I had to put in the proper perspective. A parent will need to find ways to reinforce in their child's life the training that you are giving them and the teaching that you are giving them.

Last week, I gave you five stages of training your child and defined them for you. We talked about the discipline stage. We talked about the next stage being the relationship stage, then moving into a fellowship stage, moving up as they grow into a responsibility stage, and then coming full circle and coming back into the ministry stage. You build on each one of these; they overlap, but from birth to adulthood, you bring them full circle with the end result, through all of the teaching and the training, to establish them in the ministry of what you want them to do. I told you before that raising a family and a church family are great parallels. My goal for all of you is to have a process of training that results in ministry. Just like some families, children never get there. Not all of you will get there. But it has always been my goal to try to accomplish that. You build through a biblical process and progression, building a solid foundation based on clear, solid biblical principles of the Word of God throughout their life. Then you walk your child through those early years. You put those things in their world, help them to make their life like on a solid rock, which is Bible doctrine.

We talked about insulating them from the things to come. At the same time you are insulating, ensuring that no outside influence will have more control over your child than you do. That is truly what you want; that is your goal and the key. As long as you can maintain control of your child and no other influence comes into their world, and you keep them on track in the training and the teaching, you will not have many problems.

II. The Six Types of Parents: An Overview

Today, I want to talk to you about being a parent. I want to talk to you about parenting. I told you last Thursday night that today I want to talk about the six types of parents that you are going to find in the world today. I want to lay out for you something that I have put together over the last forty-five-plus years in my life. I did not get this out of a book, nor off the internet, nor did I hear someone else preach on it. For the last forty-five years of my life, I have simply observed, and this is one hundred percent accurate, the six kinds of parenting or parents that you will find.

Proverbs 22:6 says:

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

That is our verse that we are going to build around today. I want to talk to you about the six kinds of parents that you are going to find.

In medicine, when they come out with a new drug or some kind of new medical procedure, most generally a new drug, they will do a trial study on it. Before they ever release it to the public, they will take maybe four or five years of testing, observation. They will do clinical studies. They will see over a period of time how this drug works with people, and is it ready to be put out there, and does it work or not? They want to know what the side effects are, they want to know what the benefits are, and all of those things. Well, my business is not drugs nor medical procedures. But my business is people. My business is families, mothers, fathers, and children. For almost fifty years now, I have studied parents. I have been involved with families as they went through their problems, and I was not someone who just went through it and forgot about it. I felt that if God was putting these people in my life, they were coming in not only for me to help them, but for them to help me. So I began a process of cataloging what I found to be true in dealing with parents. I watch parents. I have probably six-plus pages in the back of my Bible and probably ten notebooks at home full of things I have studied while watching parents. I have written three books on the subject, and there are a number of pamphlets. I have seen every mistake a parent will make in real time. I have watched them make some of the most disastrous mistakes on the planet. I have watched some that were very good at what they did. I have worked the problems alongside of mothers and fathers all of my life.

I have found that there are patterns to parenting, just as there are patterns to children, just as everything in the Bible falls into a pattern. The key is to learn those patterns. The key to learning and understanding how to study and truly understand parenting is to get the Bible's concept of what a real parent should be and then use that as your baseline. I talked to you last week about how people use terms without any reference of context. "That is a great family." "That is a great guy." "He did a great job." I would always ask myself, "Compared to who? Compared to what?" What is your standard by which you are making that statement to judge it? Of course, the key to learning and understanding and figuring it all out is to understand the biblical concept of what a real, biblically based family, parent, or church should be.

Years ago, I had a kid in my class who went into the FBI. I met him sometime later, and he had been assigned to the counterfeit division, which investigates counterfeit money. That has always intrigued me. I said, "Man, that has to be tough!" I mean, every guy out there who fakes a hundred-dollar bill or a twenty, they are all going to look very good, but they are all going to be different. "How in the world do you stay current on studying? You would have to study one hundred, two hundred different fake bills." He said, "Oh, no, no, no." I said, "That is not the way we do it." I said, "Well, I am intrigued. How do you do it?" He said, "We do not study all the fake ones. We all know what a real hundred-dollar bill looks like." When you study a real hundred-dollar bill and you know what it looks like, what it is, and every aspect of it, when you put a fake alongside the real one, the fake just stands out like a neon sign. I thought about that. That is true of everything in Christianity. We have many things in Christianity that are portrayed as being biblical and being good and of God. But when you put it up against the context of the real thing, the phony shows right through. That is so true in churches. It is so true in parenting.

As I looked at this, I thought to myself, in parenting as ministry, it is very important to have a concept, one biblical principle that I believe must come into play at some point in your family. We talked a little about this last Thursday night. I told you that biblical principle was the concept of grace and truth.

III. Truth as Final Authority: Dogma and Doctrine

John 1:17

For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

In the ministry dealing with people, as in parenting dealing with your children, you need to understand this great principle of grace and truth. Now, let us talk about truth for a moment. Truth is what the Bible says. Truth is what the Bible lays down, and there is no wiggle room with it. The Bible is all truth. There is no truth outside the Bible. The Bible for us in this church is our final authority. We believe the Bible above all else. Everything we do runs through the Bible, not around the Bible.

When you have truth, truth will contain three vital concepts for a church and for a family, which we are discussing here.

1. First, truth will become an authority for you. In other words, you are going to have to have an authority in your life.
2. Second, truth will demand an accountability and a responsibility. You cannot have truth as a final authority and be an authority in your life, and then not take responsibility or be accountable for anything in your life.

These three aspects are the most hated three words in Christianity. They truly are. You would think that they would not be. You would think that God's people, once they had the truth, that the truth would be the impact in their life that it is supposed to be. That is not true today. People like to go to church. People like to pretend that they are all right with God, but they do not want any personal accountability. They do not want any responsibility for anything, and they do not want any authority in their life telling them what they do not want to know.

You will find, when it comes to the mega-church concept today, the mega-church concept is such a haven for people who do not want to have any authority in their life. They can go to church, talk about the church, saying, "I was there in church on Sunday," but in a large church, there is no accountability. You show up here and you miss two or three weeks in a row. Somebody is going to ask you where you have been. If you have been sick, you are going to say, "I was sick." If you are someplace that you should not be and your life is beginning to unravel with God, the answer is going to be, "Well, I was not here." How many times have I heard, "Hey, I missed it the last couple of weeks. You were not here." "Yep." "How was it getting high? How was it getting drunk?" There is something amiss. Of course, in a big church, you can float between the pews. Nobody will ever, ever, ever know if you are there or not. You do not have to ever be involved in ministry. Nobody really cares. You are just there. In churches today, we want to go to church. We

want to put on a Christian facade, but we do not want to be responsible. We do not want to be accountable. And we do not want to put ourselves under the authority of the Word of God.

When it all boils down in churches and Christianity today, the hatred for the King James Bible comes down to one thing: it is God's final authority, and men do not want to be under a final authority. Men want to be the authority themselves in the theological world. We do not go there very often, but in the theological world, you have a word. It is called "dogmatic." Sometimes you hear it used as "dogma." It means "what to think." It is a settled opinion. It is a maximum principle that someone has built into their life and now stands on. The word is usually used in a context of churches and religions regarding what they believe. Where dogma, or being dogmatic, deals with what you think, there is another word that we use all the time called "doctrine," which means what we teach. So when you have the dogma, and you are dogmatic about this, this is what I believe; the doctrine is that what I believe is what I teach.

Churches, Christians, pastors today, are not dogmatic about anything for the most part. There is no real stand on anything in most cases. This all started around the turn of the century, around the 1900s in America, with the beginning of two movements that in time not only destroyed the churches, but it came into the families. The reason why families are not dogmatic about anything and have no standards that they stand on is because most of the churches they go to do not.

IV. The Erosion of Truth: Neo-Evangelicalism and Neo-Orthodoxy

The first thing that came into being was a new thought called Neo-Evangelicalism. It started around 1900, in the late 1800s. The purpose of Neo-Evangelicalism was to bring Christianity back to an accredited form of thought. It has been called by authors a reconstruction of theology. What it really boiled down to was they wanted to take the Bible out of the hand of the common man and put it back into the realm of scholarship. Where now they all get along; it is a shift from a hard, dogmatic dogma, Bible doctrine stand to a soft-shell Bible teaching without any real doctrine. It was a counter to the Philadelphia church age. It takes the Bible from the common man. Salvation was shifted to become the main thing. The most important thing in a church now is salvation. But that is not true, because the most important thing in Christianity is not salvation. The most important thing in Christianity is truth. When they did not have truth and they just had salvation, as time went on, salvation became watered down. Salvation became lost in all of the things, and now salvation is a feeling. Salvation is an experience. Salvation is someone going to someone's house and knocking on the door and saying, "Hey, you need to be saved," or going out on the street and talking to somebody. They come back and they say, "Well, I won that person to Christ; they got saved." Let me tell you something. If you do not understand some fundamental things about winning somebody to Christ and what it takes to be saved, you are kidding yourself.

I have met people all my life that struggle with their salvation. They struggle with their salvation in one way or another all of their lives. The reason goes back to the fact that some idiot won them to Christ and never did his job the way he should. That person goes around the rest of their

life thinking they are saved, struggling with it, hoping they are, when in actuality, they probably are not. That is where we are at today. That is what it does.

Now, these churches are non-denominational in nature. You will find they are called a Christian church or evangelical churches. They have a generic name. They do not put any denomination on it. Sometimes you will see "Community Church," "Village Church," "Harvest Church," "First Bible Church," "Grace Church," or "Community Family Center Church." They have some generic name that sounds very good, but it is detached from anything that would lend itself to any real dogmatic stand. To move on one step further, this is why in the world that we live in today, most churches that were once Baptist churches are taking the word "Baptist" off their name. They are making a shift from a dogmatic stand to a gray, mushy area where you do not have to stand on anything. And this is where we find ourselves today.

The second thing that started around the 1920s or the 1930s was a movement called Neo-Orthodoxy. Orthodoxy, you know, means "sound in the faith." When we talk about the Jews in America, we know that they are probably pretty midline, not truly committed Jews. But if you want to find the really hardline Jews, you go to New York City or you go to some big city where they have their little enclaves, or go to Jerusalem, and you will find what we call Orthodox Jews. Orthodox Jews still wear their traditional clothes, wear their hats, cut their hair, wear their beards, and they are at the Wailing Wall most of the day. Of course, they are sound, and that is what the word "orthodox" means. Neo-Orthodoxy was a new stand, a new teaching. When it came into being, their idea was to change the Bible and change churches to fit our changing society. In other words, the Bible was not a fixed position that the rest of the world came to. The Bible was an evolving document that continued to evolve as man and society evolved, and you had to bring the Bible along. We believe that the Bible is a fixed truth for any man, at any time in history. If you want to fix something, you adjust what you believe to the Book. Neo-Orthodoxy was, "We will adjust the Book to what you believe." And that is where it all comes in. Keep up with society.

You will find that if you go down Raytown, 350 Highway, coming from Nolan Road, up past the fire station, up past that little gas station. Then there are some storage places right there, and there is a big billboard. The billboard says, "What church?" (with a question mark) "What church would welcome gays, honor women, seek social justice, affirms many ways to God?" The question is, what church would do that? Well, it was not the church of Jesus Christ, that is for sure. But that is Neo-Orthodoxy, you see? Neo-Orthodoxy states that anybody can come in. Now, if you are listening online or are here this morning, I do not want you to think that if a gay man or woman came in here, they would not be welcome. They could come to church here. There is no problem with that at all. Nobody is going to shun them. Nobody is going to walk over and ask them to leave. But I must tell you, I will turn in my sermon in Genesis 18 and 19, and we will go with it from there.

It is a thing where they say, "Honor women." Now, when they are talking about honoring women, I am all for that. Women need to be honored. They need to be cherished and need to be worshipped. But they are not talking about that. The Bible says he that finds a woman finds a good thing. They are not talking about that. They are talking about women pastors and women

deacons. And that is what they are talking about. "Seek social justice." Well, that is the fact that that is everything that is wrong with America. And they say, "We want our rights. We want social justice." I believe in social justice, and I believe we all ought to get our rights. And our right through social justice is that we all have a right to die and go to hell and spend an eternity in the Lake of Fire. So I believe in social injustice. I believe that socially I am maladjusted and ingested, and God came down to save me from it. So I am good.

And then the last thing is affirming many ways to God. I have a sister-in-law who is within this group here. She is a Neo-Orthodox big-timer in every one of these things. They have had discussions with her, and over time, I do not have much anymore, but it is a closed door. But I remember her telling me, we lived in Missouri and would go back to Canton, and we were talking about salvation and everything, and they just had a real problem with the blood of Christ. It is like, "We are a bloody religion," or something like that. "Slaughterhouse religion" is what they call it. And so she was telling me, she said, "No, Bob," she said, "just like you are from Kansas City, there are five or six ways you could get to Canton. You do not have to come one way." And she said, "In the same thinking, there are many ways you can get to God." And I thought to myself, "That is Neo-Orthodoxy right where it is at today." The fact that there are many aspects to many ways you can get to God. These kinds of churches are Lutheran churches, the Anglican Church, Methodist, Presbyterian, Churches of Christ (not the Water Dog people, but the real liberal ones). Their idea is that there is no sin; we are all God's children. And that the social gospel is what they preached, and that is why they are so busy seeking social justice, because they are preaching a social gospel. They have women pastors and women deacons.

If you knew anything about your history, you would know that when these two things came along at the turn of the century and in the 1920s, the old-timers like Bob Jones Sr., J. Frank Norris, and Billy Sunday, they took hard stands against this. They preached against this. This was looked at as the liberalism that was going to destroy Bible Christianity, and it did. In fact, from the 1900s up to the 1940s, it was this very thought that destroyed the Southern Baptist Convention. In the 1920s, the Southern Baptist Convention had something like thirty seminaries across America. They were turning out preacher after preacher after preacher. They do not believe the Bible is the Word of God anymore. They believe that the story of Adam and Eve was a fable. They believe that Noah's flood had not really happened, that it was just a local fable. They have completely destroyed it, and it all came back to this. The end result of both of these movements was to make Christianity stand for nothing. No doctrine. You are told today that when you get saved, "Do not become a fanatic. Do not go overboard on the Bible." What they are basically saying is, "Do not be dogmatic." Dogmatic is something that I am focused on, that I believe and stand on. "Do not be dogmatic." In essence, no real absolute truth. This destroyed Christianity, and as it destroyed Christianity, it destroyed the family. Now this is why churches today, as I said, they want to take "Baptist" off their names. Historically, Baptist stood for something.

I understand. There are some of the goofiest people on the planet who claim to be Baptist. I understand that. But I am telling you, wherever you find anything, you are going to find goofy people in it. You are. I have seen all kinds of churches that had Baptist churches, and most of

them, when you get there and see them, they never grow. They always stay small. They are always in control of people. Only ones that go to those churches are idiots who are like they are. They do not ever grow. Nobody would ever go there. They are very legalistic. They are very controlling. So I know they are out there. I understand. And Baptists for the most part are idiots today. I totally understand it. I can say that because I am a Baptist. And I am probably an idiot too, but that is beside the point.

But historically, Baptists always have been very dogmatic. They hold the doctrine like 2 Timothy 3:16 says that they should. In the history of the New Testament church, the development of the biblical lineage, you will find what is called Baptist distinctives. Those are the things that they were dogmatic about that made the churches strong and the family strong. When a church today leaves the doctrines or the truth and is not dogmatic, there is no dogma, then they become part of the world religious style and system of non-biblical churches. They become Neo-Evangelical, or they become Neo-Orthodox. The reason why they do it is because in their minds today, dogmatism, a dogma that you hold, will limit you to reach people. They have taken the doctrine of the Bible and truth, put it over here, so the truth of the Word of God, which is exact and what we should stand on, will not get in the way of you getting saved. Did you just hear what I just said? They have shifted their churches and taken the dogmatic truth of the Bible. I am going to walk you through here in a moment because there are seven distinctives. They have taken it out and put it over here so the truth of the Word of God, which is exact and what we should stand on, will not get in the way of you getting saved. This is why I take the position, and I will take it. I have a little experience under my belt. This is why I think most people today that come out of that system, who claim they are saved and think they are saved, have not really been saved. How do you get saved without a Bible? That is an excellent question. I do not have time to answer it today, but I will tell you, how do you get saved without truth? But salvation has become the number one thing, and truth is irrelevant anymore. It does not matter. Of course, when a church today does that, then they fall into that.

V. The Seven Baptist Distinctives

Typically, the Baptist distinctives that we are dogmatic about, you listen to them. You tell me what is wrong with them.

3. They believed that when you got saved, you got separated from the world. Oh, what a novel thought. When you got saved, you became a new creature in Christ Jesus. Old things were passed away, and all things became new, and now you were separated from the world. It is called sanctification. Sanctification means the moment you got saved, you do not drink anymore. You do not smoke dope anymore. You do not do the things in the world anymore. Now, because you are a new creature, those things are passed away. But we in Christianity today embrace those things. You have churches in this city that in the past would get up and say it is okay for you to socially drink. If that is true, Billy Sunday wasted all of his life preaching on alcoholism. See how we have shifted? It was dogmatic in Billy Sunday's day that booze was from the pit of hell. Once we got rid of the truth, we brought it into the church, and now it is social drinking. I cannot wait until they legalize marijuana, and I know

some of you are just waiting for it too. I have had Christians tell me when they legalize marijuana, it will be okay for us to do it. It is all right right now because of the fact that it is illegal. I want to tell you something. This is the mindset today. When you get rid of truth, when you do not have anything that you are dogmatic about, no dogma, nothing that you stand on, then you can do anything. And that is where we are at today.

4. The separation of church and state. They realize that as a church, we do not have any investments in politics. But yet the Neo-Evangelical crowd and the Baptists are always doing something. I want to tell you something. In all my sixty-seven years of walking planet Earth and looking at it, I have never met a politician any time, whether he was a Democrat or Republican, that was a born-again, Bible-believing man of God that stood for anything. Do you know why? Because to be a politician, you cannot stand dogmatic. You will not get any votes. You cannot; you have to play both sides. You cannot get up as a politician and speak on homosexuality or lesbianism. You cannot do this. You cannot speak out on this. You will get clobbered. And that is why Christianity and politics never work. Never work. Do you not read your Bible? Do you not know? Do you not understand that no king ever came from Levi, and no priest ever came from Judah other than David? There are two separate lines in the Bible. One is political, one is spiritual, and they never crossed. It is up one place, and he is the greatest type of Christ in the Bible. So when you see things like that, I just hate to keep playing dirty and bringing up the Bible. I do. But I am telling you, you do not change this world by putting Christians into politics. Do you know how you change this world? You get some preachers on fire in that pulpit to preach to their congregation and get them living right, which will affect the people they work with, which will affect the people in the state, which will affect the people in the country. And everybody will do what is right. If you think that you can create a better world through politics, you have your dispensations wrong. There will never be any peace on Earth until the Prince of Peace gets here. Then it will be just fine. But not till then.
5. Eternal security of the believer. Now, I am not saying you have to know this to be saved. I would not say this at all, because if that is the case, then none of us got saved. But at some point in your life, if you are going to understand salvation and what happened to you, that you know you can never lose it, and you will be surprised that people run around thinking they can lose their salvation. That is because the idiot that won you to Christ did not do his job. He just wanted to put you as a notch on his pistol. "Well, I had another one saved today." He did not care where you struggled. He does not have any answers to your struggles. He just wants to claim you as a victory trophy. In that Bible, there are twelve doctrines of salvation. You have the doctrine of propitiation. Do you know what it is? You have the doctrine of propitiation, the doctrine of remission. You have twelve exact dogmatic doctrines, teachings on salvation. I am not saying you have to know what they are to be saved, but you have to know what they are to understand why you cannot lose what you have. The doctrine of expiation. Do you know what it is? Of course, you do not. And that is why people struggle.
6. Two ordinances in the church: baptism and the Lord's Supper. We saw them last week.
7. Only two offices in the church: the pastor (sometimes called a bishop) and deacons (no women allowed). You will find that in 1 and 2 Timothy and Acts 6.
8. The pre-millennial return of Christ and the Rapture. Revelation 20, 2 Thessalonians 4.

9. King James Bible, the infallible Word of God.

These have always been the seven Baptist distinctives. These are the things that they are dogmatic on. Of course, if you preach these things hard, you are not going to win everybody. I have to say something. This is going to sound strange if you have ears to hear. Preaching is designed in some cases not to get you saved. God is not willing that any should perish, and you get saved from preaching. You realize that in the New Testament, when Jesus was here, He came to win the world, did He not? You realize there were some people that Jesus never spoke to. There were some people that when He had an opportunity to lay it out, He never did. Sometimes we get the idea that soul winning is so important that everybody needs to get saved. No, everybody does need to get saved, but hear what I am saying. Preaching is not just about getting you saved. Preaching is giving you the truth when you do not want to hear the truth so God can work on your soul that when you stand before Him at the Great White Throne Judgment, you cannot point your finger and say, "I never heard the truth." I wish everybody would get saved, but I know that is not true. It is not true, just like I wish that everybody here would do what is right with God, but you are not going to. It is like wishing every family would do what is right with their children, but it is not going to happen. Dogmatic truth is the key.

Today, Neo-Evangelicalism and Neo-Orthodoxy have taken the doctrine away from the church and destroyed it, and then turned the church of Jesus Christ into a non-biblical system where you have no doctrine, and it has destroyed the family. So now we have churches that have no dogmatic stand, and we have families who have no dogmatic stand. The model church in the Bible that we follow, and everything we should do, is the church in Antioch where they were first called Christians. The basis for any church being a legitimate New Testament, Bible-believing local church will go back to what it believes. It is dogma, not the name that it has, not how many people you have there, not how many people show up. It goes back to what you believe based on the model church and what they believe. O'Mel Zubaca said one time, we went to a wedding, and it was packed with people in a huge church. We went out, and I said, "What do you think of that, Mel?" He said, "Just because you have a crowd does not mean you have a church." Boy, no truer words were ever spoken. The authority to carry out God's mandate was given to a New Testament, Bible-believing local church that held the dogmatic truth of Acts 11, 12, and 13.

Now, I know you are wondering how I am going to get to the six things of parenting. I am walking away here; I have to get you to understand this grace and truth concept. We are still talking about truth. Last week we baptized, and there were some people in our church that got rebaptized. They had come to me and they said, "Hey, I was baptized in this church. Should I get rebaptized?" I never tell anybody what to do. That is not my job. My job is not to tell you to do anything. My job is to lay out the biblical options that you have, show you what the Bible says, and then you have to make your own choice. I am never going to tell somebody, "You need to get rebaptized." I am never going to tell somebody, "You are not saved." I am never going to tell somebody this or that. I am going to show you what the Bible says and let the Holy Spirit of God deal with you. That is the best way to do it. These people came to me, and they were baptized, and they would ask me. They would say, "Hey, I was baptized in this church. Is this church a New Testament, Bible-believing local church?" And I would say, "No, it is not." It is not based

on the fact that they are not dogmatic about anything. They are not, because of the fact that they do not follow any truth. They are not the model church based in Acts 11. They may be a church. It may be great. Here is the church, there is the steeple, open the door and there are all the people. I understand. But it is more than that. It is more than getting a bunch of people, a pastor, and a pulpit. It is what you stand for. If you do not stand for the New Testament model church in Acts 11, 12, and 13, and by God's standard you are a church, great. You are a congregation, praise Jesus. You have all those things. But you are not a New Testament local church based on a New Testament. And as such, you do not have the authority to baptize under the New Testament. Maybe you do, but you do not have the authority to do it. The authority goes back to the dogmatic church in Acts, what they believed. And I know that is not popular today. So truth will be our dogma. With truth, we have accountability. We have responsibility because it becomes our authority. And we are dogmatic about it, and in churches and in families, it is vitally important.

VI. Grace: Administering Truth with Affection, Availability, Appreciation, and Acceptance

Now, grace and truth. I just switched them. Grace. The Bible says that grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Grace, on the other hand, will be how you use the truth that God has given you. Truth can be brutal. Grace will soften the blow. A balance of grace and truth is vital in dealing with people and dealing with your children in a family. I am using the parallels between a church and a family so you can see an illustration to better understand it. Most parents and most churches follow two distinct categories.

10. They will have truth, but they will have no grace. I have known many churches that believe the King James Bible, and they stand for the truth, but they have no grace. It is all black and white to them. It is a hard line right down the line. If somebody came into their church that they did not think were dressed the right way, they would ask them to leave, or they would all get in a corner and talk about it, which does not take much, because most of these churches only run five or six people, so it would be just over in a corner. Somebody could not miss them. They never grow. They never go anywhere, but they have the truth. But they have no grace. They beat up their people. They put their people under unrealistic situations, but they have the truth. "We believe the King James Bible." You may believe it, but you only have half of it. You have the truth, but you have no ability to use that truth to work with people and help people. Your truth hurts people.

I appreciate Chris Piscano. He heads up our street preaching ministry, and I have told Chris this before. I have never been a fan of street preachers. Never have. I have never had a street preaching ministry in my church. I never wanted one until Chris came back to be with me. I baptized him many, many years ago. He was out in the world, came back, God brought him back here, and he has a heart for street preaching. I have to say, he does it right. He does it right. I appreciate what he does. I appreciate how he does it. He has a heart for it. He is a bonafide New Testament street preacher. He really is. And I had no use for them. No use for them, because they have truth, but they have no grace. They are in a world where people who already have a bad connotation of Christianity, you go out on the street corner and just beat the fire out of them.

I was in Boston one time preaching at a church, and there was a young guy up there who was a street preacher, later went on to be a missionary. We were driving from one place to another in his car, in downtown Boston. It was about a twenty-minute ride. He had these big stickers all over his car about the King James Bible and all this stuff. So we were down there talking, and he said, "Well, it is just time to do a little preaching." So he picked up the microphone from his CB in his car and turned on the PA. There were some women walking across the street at the light. I do not care if they were; they were not; they looked like they were out on the town. They were just nice ladies walking across the street. He said, "God knows where you are going tonight!" He started to say some really disparaging things to them. There was a guy walking down the block. A nice guy, he looked like a businessman. And he said, "Sir, the eternal hellfires are on your heels! God knows where you are going tonight and knows every thought in your heart!" which is all true. I do not argue that it is not true. I am just saying you are never going to win them that way. Then, after about fifteen minutes, and I was shrinking down in the car, getting as low as I could, he handed the mic to me and said, "Here, brother, you go ahead and have a hand on it." I took it and said, "Parts line one," and I hung it up. No way. Now, he had truth. He was a nice kid. He had truth, but he had absolutely no grace. He was a hardliner who turned more people off in his life. He went to Africa to be a missionary. I can see that really working in Africa, except you would have to have your loudspeaker on an ox cart.

11. Then you find some that have grace, but they have no truth. That is like our little billboard sign. You find families the same way. Every once in a while, you will find a church or a pastor who has a good balance. Not many left, but there are a few out there. A great balance of grace and truth. Truth is hardline. Truth is dogmatic. Grace is your ability to present that truth without hurting somebody. But these guys are all mad at God, as far as I am concerned. And they are out to hurt people. They want to show the world, "I am standing for the truth!" Now, you are a village idiot looking for a city to live in. Until I met someone who did it right, I was never interested in it. But you do a good job for us. And you head up our street preaching. I encourage you, mothers and fathers, when your kids get a little older, let them go down.

With families and parenting, it takes the same good balance between grace and truth. To hold them accountable, but grace is the ability to use that truth without hurting them. Truth will be hardline. It will be black and white. But truth should be administered with four areas that make truth workable in a person's life. This is why I do not knock on doors. I thought that was always pretty worthless. It may have worked at one time, but most of the guys that do that today are out on visitation at night or similar things. Most of the guys that do that, that is just because they do not know any better, and that is their mindset. And they do not, in their church, reflect it. Three chickens and a duck on Sunday morning. You cannot, in the world we live in today, you cannot reach people for Christ without investing your life in them. You just cannot do it. If you think you can just go to a door and say, "Hi sir, you need Jesus Christ as your own personal Savior," you are going to go, "Oh, praise Jesus! I was standing on the roof three nights ago, and a vision came down that an idiot was going to come to my door, and here you are!"

Let me tell you the four things you have to have when you have the truth and you want to administer it through grace. Are you with me here?

12. You have to have affection. When you have your child and your child is in your family, and you have to drop the hammer of truth on them, you minister that truth through the grace of your affection for them. They always know that you love them above everything else in life.
13. The second thing that you have to convey into their world is availability. You may have to administer the hardline of black and white truth, but you are going to administer it through the concept of grace that you know that you are always going to be there for them, that there is not a time in their life that you are not going to be in their presence to keep them accountable, but also to show them the affection that you love them.
14. The third thing you have to do when you administer the hardline of truth, you have to minister through the grace of appreciation. You have to let them know how important they are to your family. You have to say things like, "You know what? We would not be a family without you. We are not complete without you. I know you do not understand why I have to be so hard on you with truth, but the reason is because you are so important to us as a family. I am not going to allow you to step outside of the laws of God that this family has set for, not because I am being hardline, but because I love you so much. You are so important to us. You are everything that we ever wanted. You are our miracle child. You are our miracle children. You are what God gave us. God blessed us. Like He brought down the manna from Heaven. He brought down you into our family, and you are important to us. We love you. We are here for you. We appreciate you."
15. And then the fourth thing, you may have to put the hammer of truth in their life, but you have to put it through the grace of acceptance. "I do not like what you did, but I am going to accept you the way you are, and I am going to help you get better."

The hardline of truth was not squelched at all, because truth is vital. It is a dogmatic thing you have to have in a church. Let me stop here. You realize, and maybe you pick it up, this is how I built my church? We go out to eat someplace after volleyball, after whatever, I will get there first, eat real quick, and I always tell Barb, "I am on the clock." She says, "Go ahead, you are on the clock." I walk around to the tables where you are sitting, and I tell everyone how important you are. I tell everyone how much I love you, how vital they are. I could not do what I do without you. I am not just doing it because I am thinking, "Oh, I am just going to go." I believe that. I believe it just like every parent believes it with their children. I believe that every parent, even a parent that does not do it, I believe they believe these things. I believe your problem is you do not understand the process to do it. Sometimes it is hard for a parent; it is very hard for a pastor to tell his congregation, "Oh, I love you," in a general way. No, it is something else to look you in the eye and say, "I really love you. I really appreciate what you do for me. You are everything I want. I love everything you do for me. I really love, you are everything. We would not have what we have here without you. You are vital to me. I have watched you grow and I have watched what God has done with you. We would not be what we have without you." That is how you build a family. That is how you build a church. You do not build a church by getting up there and telling you what is wrong with you. Do you know why I do not have to do that? I just preach the Word of God. You already know what is wrong with you. It is not under any illusion

in anybody's life today what your problems are. Me putting them out to you, as good as that may be, the Holy Spirit of God is always better. I have found that when you legitimately love somebody and do not get into all the downside of things and beat them up all the time. Now, I will preach some hard messages from here. You bet I will.

Sometimes I was at a truck stop one time, and I was just a kid, and I never forgot this. We were going someplace, and we stopped at a truck stop, and there was a big old truck there. A truck driver got out, and he pulled out from behind the seat a big metal pipe. He walked around to every one of those tires and beat the tires, every one of them. I was just a little kid, and he said, "Hi, Sonny, how are you?" I said, "I am fine, how are you?" I said, "Man, that is a nice truck!" And he said, "Well, thank you." I said, "Can I ask you a question?" I said, "Why are you beating the tires?" He said, "Oh," I said, "Is there something wrong with your tires?" He said, "Oh, no, no, there is nothing wrong with your tires." He said, "I beat the tires to make sure that there is no problem with the tires, that they are staying inflated." I never forgot that. Years later, when I started preaching, sometimes on Sunday morning, you just have to beat the tires. You just have to beat the tires. I do not think there is anything wrong. I just want to see if they are all whole and sound. O'Mel used to tell a story about this woman in this church. Every time the pastor would give an invitation, the woman would come down, and she would say, "Oh, God, oh, God, fill me! Oh, God, fill me!" And the preacher would go on with it. Next sermon, she would come down again. "Oh, God, fill me!" He did this every service. Finally, the preacher got so fed up with it, he came down, and she said, "Oh, God, fill me!" The preacher said, "Oh, God, fix the leak!"

You administer truth. But you administer truth through affection, through your availability, through your appreciation of who they are, and your acceptance of who they are. I would like you to be better than you are. I have met people in my church, in my life, and in my ministry that I thought could be a lot better than they are. But I realized over the years that my job is not to necessarily beat you up for not being where you are at, but to do my job to help you get where God wants you to be. Now, maybe you will not do it, but it does not matter. There is no skin off my nose. It is not going to affect my life any. I am here to help you. I am here to be here for you. I am here to help you get better with what God wants. If you want to stay in that mindset, that is okay. I still love you. I will still be your friend. I do not ever look at anybody and think, "Well, I do not like that person because they do not do what is right." If I do not like you, it would be for another reason. It will not be for that one, because I realize that you have to accept people where they are at and then try to make them better. And until you are willing to accept somebody where they are at, you will never make them better. And that is true of your children. That is true of your children.

VII. Six Types of Parents: Detailed Breakdown

Now, I want to talk to you about six types of parents here real quick. Through a balance of truth and grace in your life. Truth being the sharp edges, grace being the rounding and polishing of the edges. In dealing with families for forty-five-plus years, I have cataloged these, and it has allowed me to do this. Now, I want to say that they overlap here a little bit, and they overlap in a

way where sometimes you will see multiple things here. But fundamentally, I have divided them up. Here are the six types of parents you have.

The Autocratic Parent1.) This one is what I call an autocratic parent. Their style of parenting will be very hardline. "My way or the highway," so to speak. You find many fathers like this that never tell their children they love them. They are always tough on them. Johnny Cash wrote a song years ago about a boy named Sue. His dad named him Sue because he knew life was going to be tough, and the child would have to fight over that name all of his life and would make him strong. That is not the way to handle it. That is a kind of autocratic parenting. There is no grace involved. It is almost like the children are under the Old Testament Law. It can be very hardline without any Bible, or it can be very hardline within churches within the Bible. Totally out of bounds. Pounding in truth without any grace. These parents in the churches can be very legalistic. They set up a complete unbiblical set of rules that has nothing to do with anything in the Bible because they want to pretend they are spiritual. And they are idiots. They really are.No TV.No movie night.No music outside the church.No jeans or slacks for the women.No shorts.I know of churches where, when the children went to camp in the summertime and the girls wanted to play softball, they had to wear pants underneath their shorts. It is just ludicrous. It is a thing where they would not let them wear shorts, or they would make them wear culottes, whatever culottes are. I never understood that. Did you ever see somebody sliding to home base wearing culottes? Come on. But then, no sliding either. In some churches I have seen in the past, all the men are on one side and all the women are on the other. No, you do not get together. So you get together afterwards. It does not work. Churches where if you have been divorced, your life is over. "Go kill yourself." I have known churches that had special study school classes for divorced people because they did not want them to taint the congregation. And then they watch them with cameras. Because the moment you start to be friendly with somebody, and you have been divorced, you now have to stay single the rest of your life. I always thought it is easy for a pastor who is married to put that burden on somebody else. Now, I realize when you get a divorce, there are some things you have to work through, and I understand. But if you think you have to stay single the rest of your life because you were divorced. Now, maybe you should, because you do not know how to handle a marriage, but I am saying from the Bible standpoint, come on. Come on. But those are the rules, you see. I had a church one time where a guy said, "Well, I am divorced, what can I do?" "Can I be a deacon?" "Oh." "Can I be a Sunday school teacher? Can I disciple somebody?" "Nope. Nope. Cannot do that." "What can I do?" "You can tithe." In this, when your kids hit seventeen or eighteen, they are gone. They slingshot away. You have been such a prison to them that a boyfriend or girlfriend throws them a hacksaw. They bust out of jail. They want to get away from that lifestyle absolutely unbelievably.The Permissive Parent2.) Then you have what I call the permissive parents. Now, these types of parents have no rules whatsoever. The family is not based on any truth. The parents are so afraid that they will lose the love of their child that they allow everything in their life and will not discipline at all. Certainly no spanking. Many times, the parent follows worldly child psychology or some book that they read that is so off the wall that it is unbelievable. But with a child that is thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen, it is obvious who is in control of the family. It is not the parents. These children will grow up and use church and God just like they will use the parents and never see any real value in anything spiritual. So they never had any discipline. They never had any

structure. The parents lose complete control at this level, and it is a disaster. The key thing to look for in forms of this parenting, and I have chronicled this over the years, I will just tell you: weak fathers, strong mothers. Role reversal. I say that probably eighty to eighty-five percent of the time throughout my ministry of some forty-some years, every time somebody got their nose out of joint and left the church over something that was stupid, it was usually because the father was weak and the woman was strong. I have said to the guys before, "What is going on? Why did you not come, and we worked this thing out?" "Well, my wife did not want me to." "Okay. Who is in charge here?" I have them telling me. When you get a role reversal where the man is supposed to be in charge and the woman takes charge, and he is like a little chihuahua out in the yard wanting to go potty, you are in trouble. Weak fathers will always be a problem in the family. It just will. I am sorry. It just is. God did not design it that way. God designed you to lead your family. Now, I said that. If you are here and you feel like you cannot lead your family, come and talk to me. I will help you. I will help you. I will give you a whip, a chair, and a gun. We will get it all into place. I will show you what to do. Many fathers do not do it because they are afraid to do it. They are afraid they will fail. It is okay. I will help you. I will help you. We will work it out. There is no reason for you not to be the spiritual leader of your home unless you just do not want to be. Some guys like their wives telling them what to do. I have gotten used to it. I love it. The Neglectful Parent³.) Then the third type of parent is neglectful parents. Now, in this style of parenting, the parents have no rules whatsoever, and they allow the children just to run wild. Now, I will just say this because I am just going to say it. When you grow up in church, you need to teach your children that this church is not a playground. They are running all over the place, climbing on everything. No Bible, no rules, no accountability, no structure. Parents, I am moving through this as fast as I can. Parents basically allow their children to figure it out for themselves on their own. "Hey, kid, you figure it out. You do it." Parents like this fall into two categories in the Bible that are great studies. One of them is Lot in Genesis 17-19. And the other one is a man in Judges 11 named Jephthah. Lot was a picture of a father that was out of church living in the world. Jephthah is a picture of a father who was in church and living in the world. In the end, both their children get destroyed. Lot had such a terrible value system that when he finally goes to his children to tell them God was going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, the Bible says that they laughed at him as one that mocked. They thought, "Dad, you are the last person on Earth that I ever thought would get a message from God." Yet the Bible says that he is a picture of a saved man, righteous Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked. Jephthah, on the other hand, he was in church. He was a spiritual leader. He just shot his mouth off because he did not know his Bible. But he wound up killing his own daughter. The Helicopter Parent⁴.) Then the fourth type of parenting I call helicopter parents. They are the type of parents who will always basically throw their child a lifeline in whatever situation he gets himself into. Hovering over them like a rescue helicopter. Throwing them a lifeline, a life vest in every bad situation the child gets into. Completely taking from that child personal responsibility and personal accountability. Mother and Father are always bailing them out, always making excuses for them. Taking God completely out of the equation. A child gets drunk, gets a DWI, gets pulled over by the police. They get him the best lawyer they can to get him out of it. He gets a second DWI. I have seen fathers whose child got four or five DWIs, and they still just kept bailing them out. The kid does not have a dime to pay for anything, and Mother and Father just keep bailing them out. You

know where those kids are today? The one in particular I have in mind today is a rank drunk who lives in a barn who could not put two nickels together all because somebody enabled him and would not hold him accountable. Their child gets into drugs. Instead of letting the courts deal with them and God deal with them, shoplifting. You can never deny your children the learning experience of God dealing with them in their life. God many times will have a course of action that they have to go through some very hard things for them to learn the lessons, and parents are always there bailing them out, providing a place for them to stay instead of letting them go through the system and letting God bring it full circle. And what is the motive? "Oh, I love my child! Oh, I love my child!" No, according to the Bible, you hate your child because true love is truth. Administering truth through grace. All you do is enable them to get deeper into sin, and down the line, when they kill some kid or they molest some child or they do this or they do that or they sell drugs and somebody else dies from it, ultimately it is going to be your responsibility because you are the one who never held the line with them. My philosophy is, "Do not put the kids in jail; put the parents in jail." Put the enablers in jail. Truth demands your personal accountability and responsibility for your actions, and you do not intervene to make it better for them. They are God's child; let God bring it to the ending and then see what He does. (The Parents Who Live in Denial⁵.) Now the fifth type of parents. These are the parents who live in denial. They have a big, nice house right there on the River Nile in Egypt. And they live in denial. In this form of parenting, their children can do no wrong. And four or five issues usually go together, and every issue the child has will now be somebody else's fault. Their child is never at fault. No personal responsibility for anything. It is always the other kid's fault or the bad influences that got into their child. I have had parents tell me, "Well, my son or my daughter, they do not go to church anymore because they had a bad experience one time at church." "Really? Well, they do not care about spiritual things anymore because some Christian friends were really mean to them." "Really?" I am going to tell you something. Other Christians do not make your children good or bad. You do. There may be things that happen in your child's life that they had no control over. And they are not responsible for some bad things that happen in the world, in church, with other Christians. But I am going to tell you something. I do not know what you have been teaching them. I do not know where you have been. Oh, I do know. You were down in your big house on Denial. You may not be responsible for some things that happen in your life, but your child needs to understand they are responsible for how they deal with it. Respond, react. And we lose those things. And I just have to ask you this: if that may be true, then who is responsible for their overall value system that allowed them to choose people like that or places like that in the first place? Families with this mindset in parenting will always lose their children to the world because you were the greatest distraction, and you, the parent, were the greatest enabler because you will not hold that child accountable, and you want to go through life blaming every problem they have on somebody else. And the child, like the parents who trained them, will go through life blaming all the issues that they face now on everybody else. It will always be the boss where they worked. They will get into a marriage, and they will get a divorce. "It was my ex." It will always be somebody else's fault. Why? Because you, as a parent in denial, never held them accountable with grace and truth. The truth of the fact that it is your fault, you have to own it, but I will go through grace and show you how we will work it together. (The Well-Balanced Parent⁶.) And then the sixth one will be the well-balanced parent.

Now, these are few and far between in the Christian life. Mothers and fathers have so much drama in their own lives that they can never do what needs to be done with a child. Mother and father's lives have been a problem. I told you a couple weeks ago it is when these children are in their most formative times that most people get their divorces, and then a child is ripped apart. The thing that God intended to be a safe, wholesome, warm atmosphere of development is thrown into chaos. And then we wonder why the children have problems. I will tell you why: because the children will always suffer when we make bad choices. Most divorces take place when the child is at this most vulnerable, tender time. This is where the child needs all the positive reinforcement that they can get through the discipline. You are reinforcing, and through the truth and grace, you are reinforcing something. You are reinforcing, "I am not going to allow you to live this way." But you are also reinforcing because you are so important. You are so valuable. And I love you. And because I love you, truth has to be the center of our home. Now, this parent, number six, has a plan. They provide a vision for the child and their family, short-term and long-term. They work through the five stages of development. They see and understand the tremendous responsibility to their children. They understand as Psalms 127 says that our children are a loan to us, that we are the stewards of them, that they are God's heritage, and their fruit is His reward. Psalms 127:1 Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: They are not only guardians of their physical bodies and protect people from hurting them. But they understand that they are the guardians of their spiritual soul. Most parents will guard their child's body, but they will leave the soul to the devil and the world out there. They understand that their child is the most valuable asset that they have. And they let the child know that. They communicate that through those four things of acceptance, availability, and affection. That home to that child has to be the safest place on this planet, a place they never want to leave. And in fact, most of them cannot wait to get out. They walk their child through every scenario. Dad leading the way, not Mom. Dad leading the way. Mom backing up support, following through with it. Dad leading the way. They work to ensure that nobody on this planet will have more say or more influence or more credibility with their child than they do. When anybody says something, that child will always look at Dad and say, "Is that true?" There is never a chance that they say, "Well, my old man does not know anything." This kind of family does not just happen by accident. It is one of truth. It is one of love. It is one of security, one of warmth, one of trust. Generated by mother and father's commitment to the things of God, the truth of God first. And in the grace to be able to minister that truth that never hurts their child. This kind of family does not just happen. It takes a lot of work, a lot of personal discipline, a lot of personal denial, a lot of personal dedication, and not losing sight of the goal and the vision that God has for you as the parent, your family, and your children. It is all based and starts with the parent and their own personal accountability and responsibility to the things of God, because we all have to deal with grace and truth in our own lives. We all have the greatest example of what we are supposed to give to our children because God's Word is truth.

VIII. Conclusion: Building a Godly Family

The truth of the matter is in all of our lives, what is true? God should have killed all of us. Every one of us. Every one of us. The moment you pulled out of your driveway and got on 350 or the

freeway, and that guy pulled out in front of you, and you said, "Praise the Lord," God should have killed you. But do you know why He did not? We violate truth all the time. Do you know why He does not do anything and kill us? Because He ministers it through grace. He will bring you to the church, bring you to the Bible, bring you through the Holy Spirit of God, and show you those four things that God administers truth through in your life. When I talk about loving God, that is a general concept that everybody would say, "Yeah, I love God," but I am talking about truly loving God. What makes you truly love God? When you understand the truth of His Word and how you are accountable to it, and what should happen to us because we violate that truth, what truly makes you love Him is the fact that the four aspects of grace that He puts in our life to administer that truth. He loves us that much. How do you not love somebody that loves you that way? I am going to say it again. How do you not love somebody that loves you that way? And for you as parents, your child will love you for loving them that way. That is how it works.

Psalms 127:1

Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it:

If God is not going to build it His way by the principles, not your homespun, goofy way of one of these types of parents or types of pastors or types of churches that is just phony beyond all belief, but just building it based on the principles, based on truth and grace. Truth, the absolute dogmatic where we stand, but grace. I will show you how to put it into your life without it hurting you. We will hold up there next week. I am going to show you how to provide a vision for your child.