

Do Not Provoke Your Children to Anger – Pt. 3: Giving Your Children Hope to Live For

INTRODUCTION:

1. In the last two lessons on this subject I have sought to examine one of the main reasons for the breakdown we are witnessing in our society's morals, values, and conscience.
 - A. The initial reason for these lessons was the shooting of six individuals in Nashville by a transgender young woman. But sadly, there have been several similar shootings since then!
 - B. Though these incidents provide fodder for certain political action groups as well as a public forum for those championing ungodliness, what they claim to be the answers are not.
2. What we are seeing today is the product of failed homes/families caused by parents not knowing God and therefore not providing what their children need to live productive and meaningful lives.
3. Therefore, their children are growing up to be **confused** and **angry**, and many are **lashing out** while others are just **giving up** on life.
4. Today I want to conclude this series on how you as **parents can avoid provoking your children to anger**.
 - A. I remind you that if as a parent you are going to do that, as I have previously presented, you must give your children godly **love to live with** as well as **law to live by**, which is God's law.
 - B. If you are a parent with children and have not heard those lessons, I encourage you to go to **cookevillechurch.com** and click on "recent lessons" where you can easily do just that.
 - C. With that in mind, today I want to consider the third part of the equation, which is that parents must give their children **hope to live for**.
 - i. Lewis B. Smedes, a theologian and religious professor, rightly said, "Hope is to our spirits what oxygen is to our lungs. Lose hope and you die. They may not bury you for a while, but without hope you are dead inside. The only way to face the future is to fly straight into it on the wings of hope...hope is the energy of the soul. Hope is the power of tomorrow."
 - ii. As Christians we should understand that the only real hope is that which comes from God.
 - a. So, to give our children hope is to give them a **joyful and confident expectation of receiving the good things promised to them by God**.
 - b. Such hope is invaluable to our children because life without this hope life is meaningless and generates frustration and anger and discouragement.
 - D. So, let's talk about giving our children **hope to live for** and how that hope is to affect life.

BODY:

- I. **This subject is important because children today are being raised without real hope.**
 - A. I did not say they are being raised *without hope*, although many are, but that they are being raised without *real hope*, or with *false hope*.
 1. In so many cases parents are leading their children to believe that *getting the things they want* and *being free to do whatever they want* are their hope for a good life.
 - a. Yet, time and again we see that those who "have it all" and can "do whatever they want" face a life of emptiness and hopelessness.
 - b. Think about how many of the rich and the famous struggle with addiction and depression and end their own lives!
 2. In other cases, parents have left their children to fend for themselves in finding any sort of meaningful hope for their life.
 - a. This is causing them to turn to their peers, the internet, and/or their godless teachers and professors for direction to find hope and happiness.
 - b. These young people are being led down a path of **immorality** and **perversion** and are being told they must **force society and everyone around them to accept their lifestyle and desires** for them to have hope.
 - c. Yet, this is also a false hope because it is completely unattainable and unsustainable.
 - i. It is unsustainable because such a hope is no firmer than the prevailing view of life valued by one's peers or the internet which changes with the seasons!

- ii. It is unattainable because when hope is based on what society thinks and does, that hope is built on the “shifting sand” of **sinfully selfish and self-centered people!**
 - iii. When everyone is concerned only with themselves, their desires, and getting everyone else to do what they want, how do you think the world is going to be?
 - 3. What are the results?
 - a. For those who are not angry and/or violently lashing out, the remaining option is to give up and end their lives.
 - b. The **2022 CDC report on suicide** shows this is happening at an alarming rate.
 - i. Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for teens and young adults ages **10-34**, with only **accidents** surpassing it.
 - ii. **25.5%** of adults ages 18-24 reported having **seriously considered suicide** in the **past month**. This is a higher percentage than any other adult age group.
 - iii. **18.8%** of high school students reported having seriously considered suicide in the past year, **24.1%** of them being females, **46.8%** being lesbian, gay, or bisexual teens.
 - iv. **8.9%** of high school students stated they had **attempted suicide** in the past year (these are the one that failed – Are they “crying out?”), with **11%** being females, **11.8%** black teens, and **23.4%** being lesbian, gay, or bisexual teens.
- B. As ungodliness and secularism get a greater foothold in our society, this is only going to get worse!
 - 1. It is not going to be changed by a better economy or by a change in government because it is not a financial or government matter.
 - 2. Convincing society to accept more sin and immorality will only make things worse (Rom. 1:28-32 – “**And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer**, God gave them over to a **depraved mind**, to do those things which **are not proper**,²⁹ being **filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil**; full of **envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice**; they are **gossips**,³⁰ slanderers, **haters of God**, insolent, **arrogant**, boastful, **inventors of evil, disobedient to parents**,³¹ without understanding, **untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful**;³² and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.”).
 - 3. So, it is no wonder young people are empty and angry and giving up!
 - a. They have been lied to and sold a worthless bill of goods that is only making their lives worse.
 - i. For, who can deny that this country has wealth to spare and is far more accepting of immorality and perversion than it has ever been before?
 - ii. Yet, society is not getting better, more kind, more compassionate, loving, etc.!
 - iii. And, young people are not feeling better about themselves, their future, etc.!
 - b. Why? Because life without God is hopeless (Eph. 2:11-12 – “Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called “Uncircumcision” by the so-called “Circumcision,” which is performed in the flesh by human hands—¹² remember that you were at that time **separate from Christ**, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, **having no hope and without God in the world.**”).
 - 4. Parents must give their children real hope to live for!

II. Your child’s hope begins with you

- A. You cannot give your children what they **can see you do not possess**.
 - 1. As a Christian parent you need to know that you possess God’s great hope in your heart.
 - a. Consider how hope in Christ is described (Eph. 1:18-21 – “I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, **so that you will know what is the hope of His calling**, what are the **riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints**,¹⁹ and what is **the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe**. These are in accordance with the working of the **strength of His might**²⁰ which He brought about in Christ, when

- He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand** in the heavenly places, ²¹ **far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named**, not only in this age but also in the one to come.”).
2. So, as a Christian and a parent you need to ask if the hope of your calling:
 - a. Is valued within you as your true riches to be received in glory from God as your promised inheritance when Christ returns?
 - b. Is firmly based on the “surpassing greatness of His power” and the “strength of God’s might” shown in raising Christ from the dead?
 - c. Provides the strength and stability worthy of hope in a Savior whose rule and authority far surpasses that of everyone and everything you may face in this world?
 - d. That is the kind of hope God provides and your children need to see in you!
 - B. This is vitally important because your children will be most impressed by what they **see in you!**
 1. It has been rightly said that **a sermon lived** is far more effective than **a sermon preached**.
 2. So, your hope in Christ must shine **bright** enough that your children can **see it** and be **encouraged to embrace it** in their lives (Matt 5:16 – “Let your **light shine before men [your children]** in such a way that they may **see your good works**, and **glorify your Father** who is in heaven.”).
 3. This is a most significant burden borne by parents which cannot be taken lightly or attended to sporadically.

III. Giving your children a hope to live for requires:

- A. Seeing your hope **positively shape your priorities**.
 1. One of the main reasons kids are growing up and rejecting the Lord is that their parents’ priorities are being warped by the things of this world.
 - a. Jesus addressed this in the parable of the soils (Luke 8:14 – “The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are **choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life**, and bring no fruit to maturity.”).
 - b. Some of that fruit that never matures is their children!
 2. Your children need to **see** that your hope is not in earthy things, but in heaven.
 - a. The Spirit through Paul said it in these ways:
 - i. Col. 3:1-4 – “Therefore **if you have been raised up with Christ**, keep seeking the **things above, where Christ is**, seated at the right hand of God. ² **Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.** ³ For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, **who is our life**, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.”
 - ii. Phil. 3:20-21 – “For our citizenship is in **heaven**, from which we also **eagerly wait for the Savior**, the Lord Jesus Christ, **who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body**, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.”
 - b. Your children need to see that you have **died** to the things of this life, that you are not swayed from pursuing your hope in Christ by earthly demands, and that your hope and passion are focused on living eternally in heaven with Christ.
 3. This is vital because only when your children are **convinced** that heaven is yours and their **only real hope** will they be convinced to live the holy life necessary to gain it.
 - a. They need to see the value and excitement you gain from being a **child of God** (1 Jn. 3:1-3 – “See **how great a love the Father has bestowed on us**, that we **would be called children of God**; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ² Beloved, now **we are children of God**, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. **We know that when He appears, we will be like Him**, because we will see Him just as He is. ³ And everyone who **has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself**, just as He is pure.”).

- b. They need to see that you truly believe that “bodily exercise profits a little, but **godliness is profitable for all things**, having **promise of the life that now is** and of **that which is to come**” (1 Tim. 4:8)
 - c. To do this you must **gladly, not begrudgingly**, put **your hope** which requires separation to God and doing His will **as top priority** for you and your children over gaining wealth, school, extra-curricular activities, etc.
- B. Seeing your hope positively affect your **relationship and service to God and His people**.
- 1. The hope of the Christian life has always included the connection we have with His people (Heb. 10:23-25 – “Let us **hold fast the confession of our hope** without wavering, for He who **promised is faithful**; ²⁴ and let us **consider how to stimulate one another** to love and good deeds, ²⁵ **not forsaking our own assembling together**, as is the habit of some, but **encouraging one another**; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.”).
 - 2. Your children need to see that you truly have a passion for worshipping God and associating with His people.
 - a. God wants your hope to be expressed a **joyful desire** to worship and glorify Him, just as was expressed by David (Psa. 122:1 – “I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the LORD.”).
 - b. God wants our hope to be expressed in great love and concern for our brethren (1 Pet. 3:8-9 – “To sum up, all of you be **harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted**, and humble in spirit; ⁹ not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but **giving a blessing instead**; for **you were called for the very purpose** that you **might inherit a blessing**.”).
 - i. We are to seek harmony with kindness and humility, ultimately living our lives to be “a blessing” to our brethren and others.
 - ii. Why, because we live for the **hope of inheriting a blessing** of eternal life!
 - c. So, **as difficult as it might be at times**, you must avoid complaining about the church, its worship, or the faults of the brethren, especially in front of your children, because it will make it far more difficult to convince them of the value of the hope you have in Christ!
- C. Seeing your hope positively affect your **dealings with adversity**.
- 1. To give your children hope to live for they must witness how your hope profoundly affects your view of life and its hardships and trials.
 - a. This is vital because adversity is a common part of life.
 - b. Those who do not understand adversity’s purpose or how to overcome it in the hope of Christ are going to end up frustrated, angry, and defeated!
 - 2. Your children need to see your hope **in the face of adversity**:
 - a. By the great **encouragement and stability** it provides (Heb. 6:17-19 – “In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, ¹⁸ so that **by two unchangeable things** in which **it is impossible for God to lie**, we who have taken refuge would have **strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us**. ¹⁹ **This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast** and one which **enters within the veil**”).
 - i. Your children need to know that your hope is your **anchor** holding you steady and sure through both the good and the bad times.
 - ii. And they need to know that your hope does this because it is **anchored in the unchanging God who cannot lie**, making his **promises certain!**
 - b. By how it helps you rise above the **wrongs and mistreatment** you receive from others (Rom. 8:16-18 – “The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, heirs also, **heirs of God** and fellow heirs with Christ, **if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him**. ¹⁸ For I consider that **the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us**.”).

- i. You may not be suffering for your faith right now, but how you deal with wrongs done to you will impact how your children view your hope in Christ!
 - ii. I cannot help but be reminded of the example set by Paul and Silas in adversity (Acts 16:23, 25 – “When they had struck them [Paul and Silas] with **many blows**, they **threw them into prison**, commanding the jailer to guard them securely...²⁵ But about midnight Paul and Silas were **praying** and **singing hymns of praise to God**, and the prisoners were listening to them”).
 - iii. That is the goal we as God’s people should seek to attain to—to glorify God in the face of persecution, betrayal, and pain!
- c. By how you approach your health, wellbeing, and safety (2 Cor. 5:1-4, 7 – “For we know that **if the earthly tent** which is our house **is torn down**, we **have a building from God**, a house not made with hands, **eternal in the heavens**.² For indeed in this house we **groan, longing** to be **clothed with our dwelling from heaven**,³ inasmuch as we, having put it on, will not be found naked.⁴ For indeed **while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened**, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, **so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life**...⁷ for we walk by faith, not by sight”).
- i. Give your children an example of hope that endures even when your body does not.
 - ii. That means that when you “**groan**” from the **burdens of this life**, and you will, they see your answer is to continued serving God in faith **without complaining** because **your hope is laid up in heaven**.

CONCLUSION:

1. I hope I have encouraged you to consider your life and to work hard as a Christian and a parent to give your children the tools they need to succeed in this life and the next, which are:
 - A. Love to live with
 - B. Law to live by
 - C. Hope to live for
2. These, of course, are also the three things God has provided for all mankind in His Son, Jesus Christ.
3. So, I encourage you that if you are not in Christ, will you come today in F-R-C-Bp?