



A PARENTING SERIES

Be Present

#NPParenting

Week 4

4 of 5

May 29, 2016

Bottom Line: Nothing trumps the influence of a parent to shape a child's life and point him or her in the right direction.

Icebreaker: What is the most important lesson you learned from your parents?

Key Verse: *Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him.* Proverbs 22:15

In the service, we talked about the need to be present in your children's lives. At first glance, this seems like commonplace advice, but digging a little deeper into our habits reveals how much we need this advice in today's culture.

Of the families represented around the room, how many have children with some sort of device connected to the Internet? For families with older toddlers and above, it's probably most, if not all. More than ever our children are connected and wired in. Think about their schedule during the week. How much time do they spend watching TV and with their teachers, coaches, or friends?

The goal of these questions is not to give you a sense of guilt or shame in your parenting, but to make you realize how precious and little the time you have with your children really is. Proverbs tells us that folly (or foolishness) is bound up in the hearts of children. With all the different perspectives your child is receiving, it is impossible to insulate them from foolishness. However, that doesn't mean there's nothing you can do about it. Kids need discipline and the presence of their parents. Primarily, Proverbs is talking about corrective discipline, which is needed, but for that to happen you have to be present in their lives.

Children have so many sources of influence, but nothing trumps the influence of a parent, especially when your children are young. We need to be engaged and consistent as we train our kids to be mature, believing young men and women. Make the moments you spend with your child this week count.

THINK IT OVER >>>

Thinking back on Dwight's message, what stood out to you?

Dwight said there are four kinds of parents: permissive, neglectful, authoritarian, and authoritative.

Three keys to bring present: Be consistent, train intentionally, and stay engaged.

How have you seen that folly is bound up in your children's hearts? How have you seen folly in your own heart?

What is the connection between being present and administering discipline?

How does our struggle with sin make it harder for us to be present as parents? How can we resist this source of sin?

LOOK IT OVER <<<

Do you find it difficult to discipline your children? If so, why?

Do you know of a parent who does a really great job of being present with his or her kids? What could you learn from that person?

Are there some paths already available to you so you could increase your time with your child – volunteer in their ministry area at church, coach a team, go on a school field trip, or arrange time to spend one-on-one with each kid?

What would you say are the priorities in your home? Do any of these priorities need to change?

Is there a certain way you've failed in this area? What did/can you learn from that experience?

NEXT STEPS

This week, consider taking some next steps together, as a group:

1. Do you ever take the time to stop and consider your schedule going into the week? Sunday night (or whatever time works best), stop with your spouse, look through the family's schedule, and identify those times when you can be present. The goal is not to be overly scheduled, but to identify and maximize the time you have with your kids.
2. Pray for eyes to see the time you have with your kids from God's perspective. Ask for clarity to be consistent in the short amount of time you have. Praise God for the gift of your family, and pray earnestly that your kids would know more of Christ because of your leadership as parents.

EVALUATION/ACTION **Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ.**

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Rate yourself from 1 to 10 1 (never), 10 (always)	1	2	3	4		6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating?										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
Do you know someone who demonstrates this bottom line well? What do you admire about that person?										
What specific action can you put into practice to raise your rating?										
At the end of this week, reflect - where did you see the bottom line show up in your actions throughout the week?										

PRAYER

List group members and their prayer requests for this week:

DAILY STUDY

Want to dig deeper? Check out **The Daily** this week at newpointe.org/daily:

Day 1: Proverbs 22:6

Day 2: Ephesians 6:4

Day 3: Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Day 4: Proverbs 3:1-2

Day 5: James 1:12

Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep talking it over with others throughout the week.
(Don't forget to bring this paper to your next small group meeting)