

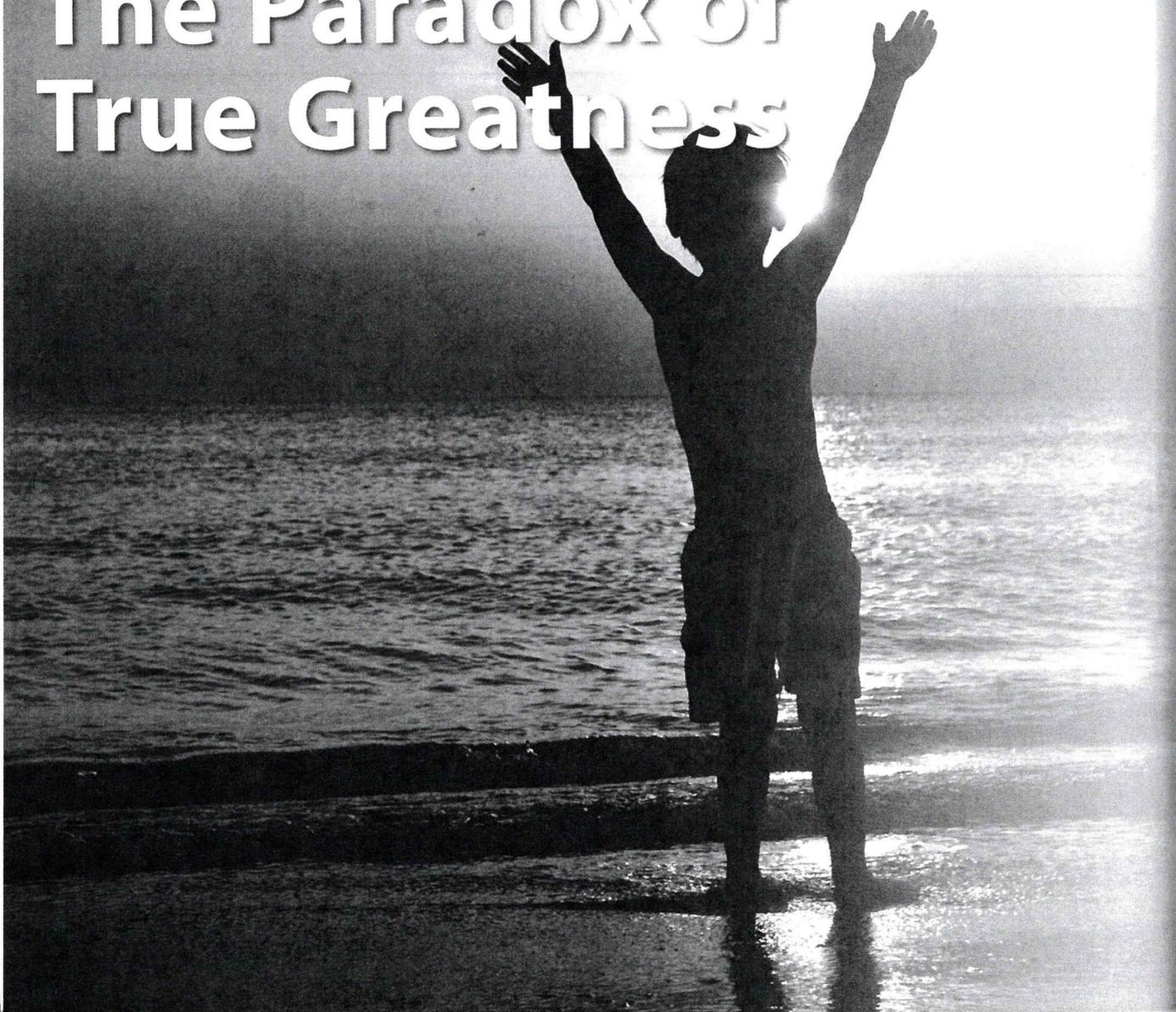
GRACE BASED parenting[®]

VIDEO SERIES

Aiming Your Child at True Greatness

Session 4

The Paradox of True Greatness



Introduction

- When it comes to success, many parents of faith run the Bible through their success filters rather than run their view of success through the filter of the Bible.
- In the process, we sabotage our spiritual influence on our children as well as set them up to rebel against us and our spiritual convictions.
- We must be careful not to allow the success syndrome to subtly program our theology and our worldview.

I. God's Kingdom economy is in stark contrast to the values emphasized by man's view of success.

- A. At first glance, the rewards of success look far more attractive than the values of True Greatness.
- B. God's math is different from the world's math when it comes to how He adds up the things that are truly important.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. Isaiah 55:8

- C. The good news is that when we take an eternal view toward God's economy, His math is not only more attractive, but offers a far richer and long-term reward.

II. Jesus' Sermon on the Mount outlines a series of paradoxes that point to the heart of True Greatness and its rich reward.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:3

Paradox 1: Truly great people have a realistic view of their _____ spiritual condition.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Matthew 5:4

Paradox 2: Truly great people identify with other people's _____.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Matthew 5:5

Paradox 3: Truly great people recognize how _____ they are of God's love.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Matthew 5:6

Paradox 4: Truly great people are _____ to pursue noble and virtuous goals.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Matthew 5:7

Paradox 5: Truly great people give other people the benefit of the doubt.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Matthew 5:8

Paradox 6: Truly great people do their best to keep their _____ aligned with God's heart.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. Matthew 5:9

Paradox 7: Truly great people live at _____ with the people around them.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:10

Paradox 8: Truly great people are willing to endure antagonism for their _____.

Conclusion

- Today's culture encourages a pursuit of a success that only offers a limited reward in this life.
- Those who pursue God's heart for True Greatness gain a reward that lasts forever.

Making This Yours

How did you do implementing the one practical application you committed to in the previous session?

Getting It Started

1. Were you ever caught in a dilemma like Tim's son was with the National Honor Society meetings? What choice did you make and how did that play out in your future?

2. Tim told a story about a father who disparaged a man simply because he was doing a job that is considered lowly to many so called "successful" people. What do you think the father was trying to accomplish by saying this to his son? What do you think was actually communicated to the son about his father and his values?

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3. Can you think of a time in your life when you questioned God's plan and provision for you and then, as things worked out, you saw how true it is that his thoughts are not our thoughts and his ways are not our ways (Isaiah 55:8)?

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4. When Tim talks about the woman who criticized her pastor for some very superficial things, what is this saying about her values? Unfortunately, pastors get this all the time. What can you do to encourage your pastor and affirm the things that really matter?

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Taking It Deeper

1. It is easy to be lured into the trap of worldly success as you work hard, save money and strive to be the best you can be. None of these are bad in themselves, but these earthly treasures may make us stop short of eternal investments. Look at how Matthew contrasts the two results and share an instance or two of how you may have allowed earthly treasures to supplant eternal ones.

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matthew 6:19-21

2. Our human nature defaults to the benefits of worldly success and it's not easy to change our heart's pursuit to True Greatness. What does Paul tell us is necessary in Romans 12:2 to change our priorities? How are you doing this and what effect is it having on your family?

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:2

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3. How has this session challenged and/or confirmed your perceptions and assumptions about parenting?

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4. As you commit to raising your children for True Greatness, what is one thing you are going to put into practice this week that you learned in this session?

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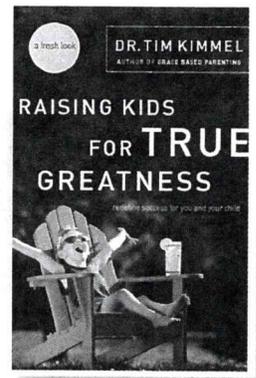
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Prayer

Father, I know that your thoughts are not my thoughts and your ways are not my ways. Thank you that you can make our weaknesses into strengths with your grace. Please help me to trust in You when it comes to the rewards of my efforts. I want to invest my life in things that last forever, especially my children. Amen

Prayer Requests: _____

We encourage you to read **Chapter 5** of Tim's book, *Raising Kids for True Greatness*, in order to get the most out of the upcoming session - **The Secret Weapon of True Greatness**.



Stay Connected:

You can talk all you want to your kids about True Greatness, but most of what they learn will be by watching you live a life of True Greatness. For some great suggestions on everyday ways you can model a heart of True Greatness, go to the **Participants'** section of **GraceBasedParenting.com** and check out *Ten Ways to Build a Great Attitude in Your Kids' Hearts toward God*.