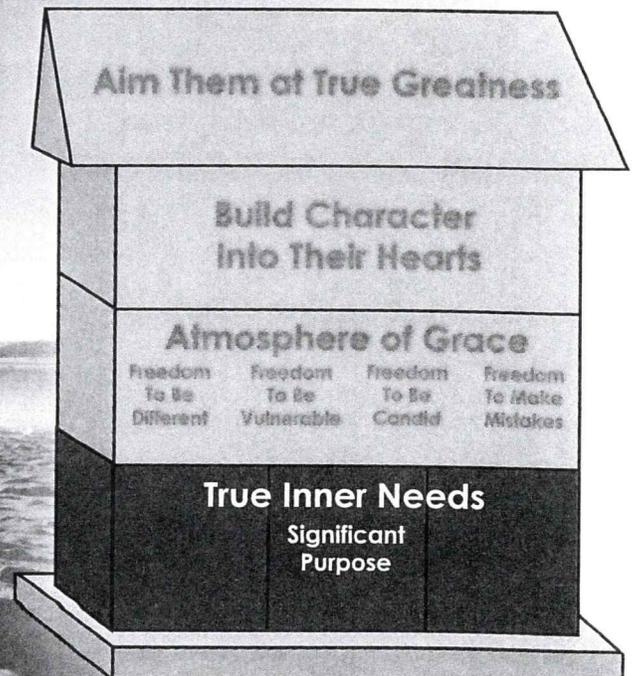


GRACE BASED parenting

Session 5

A Significant Purpose



Introduction

All children need to know they have a significant purpose on earth.

- A. There is a deep longing in the heart of every child to make a _____.

Although many people can contribute to this process, it is a child's parents that carry the greatest potential for influence.

- B. Parents need to have a deliberate and gracious involvement in identifying and developing _____.

I. Children have four levels of purpose that need to be developed.

- A. A _____ Purpose

A general purpose empowers a child to grow up to play a strategic role in the larger family of man.

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interest of others. Philippians 2:3-4

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B. A _____ Purpose

A specific purpose enables a child to use their God-given skills and abilities wisely.

C. A _____ Purpose

A relational purpose allows a child to navigate his or her social context in a much more deliberate and valuable way.

D. A _____ Purpose

A spiritual purpose helps a child develop a meaningful and eternal relationship with God, as well as prepares them to make a spiritual difference in other people's lives.

You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world... let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:13,14,16

II. There are three powerful ways to build a significant purpose into a child's heart.

A. Give them regular _____.

- Kids who hear well-timed affirmation from their parents are more easily convinced of their God-given intrinsic worth.
- Affirmation loves to catch children doing things right. It notices when they do things that don't come easily to them.
- We must avoid the trap of handing out a lot of empty praise.

*I'll give thanks to Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
wonderful are Thy works, and my soul knows it full well.*

Psalm 139:14, NASB

B. Give them focused _____.

- It's hard to build a significant purpose into people who feel like footnotes to our daily lives.

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C. Give them graceful _____.

- Everyone is born with a bent toward selfishness. The lure of sin loses a lot of its potency when a life of grace is attractively modeled.
- When our children fall short, discipline and consequences—gracefully applied—communicate the incredible worth you place on them.

It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ... Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits and live? ... All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. Hebrews 12:7, 9, 11, NASB

Conclusion

It's never too late.

- We matter more to our kids than we realize. They were born with a need to make a difference. For good or for ill, we play the biggest role in determining what kind of difference they will ultimately make.
- Grace-based parents transfer a significant purpose to their children by giving them regular affirmation, focused attention, and graceful admonishment.

Making This Yours

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

Getting It Started

1. What did you dream of growing up to be when you were a child? Is reality anywhere close to those dreams? What part did your parents play in where you are today?

2. How are you doing modeling to your children the general life purpose of developing the potential of as many people as you can? Have you been rewarded with evidence of your child(ren) grasping this purpose yet?

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3. At what stage is/are each of your child(ren) in embracing a spiritual purpose? As you honestly share, enlist others to pray for your child(ren) on their spiritual journey.
4. Name your child(ren)'s three best friends, favorite subject in school, their favorite sports team, and musical group.

Taking It Deeper

1. In Matthew 25:21, we see the value of encouraging and developing the gifts that God entrusts to us. List each of your children and put down at least two skills, talents, or attributes that you are committed to nurturing in them for God's glory.

....Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Matthew 25:21

2. The Scripture below reminds us that discipline is a form of grace, and we communicate significance and worth when we gracefully admonish our children. How are you doing at administering discipline and consequences gracefully (the way God deals with us)? How can you improve?

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Bringing It Home

1. How are you doing at giving legitimate praise to your children? Are you too stingy or too insincere? If so, come up with two ways you can make your affirmation count more toward instilling a significant purpose into the heart of your child(ren).

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2. Would your children say that they have your focused attention when they need it? In what ways can you become more available to your children, and use those times of attention to reinforce their incredible worth and significance?
3. How has this session challenged your perceptions and/or assumptions about parenting?
4. As you commit to being a grace-based parent, what is one thing you are going to do this week to put into practice what you have learned in this session?

Prayer:

Dear Lord, thank you that you give our life eternal significance and that you have a divine purpose of each of our lives. Help us communicate the incredible worth that you have placed on each of our children by what we say, what we do, and how we do it. It is our greatest desire to see our children grasp their spiritual purpose Thank you that you use us as part of that journey. Amen.

Prayer Requests:

We encourage you to read **chapter five** of Tim's book, ***Grace Based Parenting***, in order to get the most out of the upcoming session of *A Strong Hope*.

