

Shepherding a Child's Heart (intro)

"Parents tend to focus on the externals of behavior rather than the internal overflow of the heart."

A. Class Introduction

- Name / Child(ren)
 - Strengths
- Expectations

B. Class Dynamics

- Authority of Scripture
 1. Everything written in the Scriptures is true and is exactly what God wants us to know.
- Relational God
 2. God is loving and desires a living, ongoing relationship with each of us.
 3. The only way to have a relationship with God is through Jesus Christ.
- Circle of Trust
 4. What is shared in the group stays in the group.
 5. We will not demean others with our words or actions.
- Points of Courtesy
 6. While we encourage the sharing of personal prayer requests, please do not use it as a vehicle to gossip about other people. Please focus on immediate family.
 7. We want this to be an open group where people feel welcome. Therefore, since we will naturally gravitate to a group of friends, please continue to include others.
 8. We will end at 12:00, for those who need to get kids home for naps. Everyone is welcome to mingle afterwards as nursery will be provided until church ends at 12:30.

C. Book Review

Tedd Tripp pulls from his experience as a parent, pastor, counselor, and school principal to put forth practical advice on parenting. From his view many people have children, but do not want to be parents. Parenting for them only takes place in order to remove intrusions to immediate comfort and convenience.

The vision of parenting Tripp presents is more than getting well-behaved children. This vision's primary focus is the heart of your child for the heart is the wellspring of life (Proverbs 4:23). It involves being a kind authority, shepherding your children to understand themselves in God's world, and keeping the gospel in clear view.

What this means and how this plays out in our everyday lives will be the focus of our discussions.

D. Questions

- Suggested HW: Intro & Chapter 1



Shepherding a Child's Heart (1)

*“Parenting is concerned with shepherding the heart.
You must learn to work back from the behavior you see,
back to the heart, exposing heart issues for your children.”*

A. Introduction

1. What are ways you would describe your child's heart? What are some examples?
(Brag about your child! _ Limit to 1-2 minutes each.)

B. Book Summary – Chapter 1

Today's chapter focuses on the heart of the child. Evil starts in the heart. Likewise, what we say and do, and what our children say and do is a reflection of what is in the heart. The basic issue is always what is going on in the heart...the heart is the control center of life. Parents often get sidetracked with behavior.

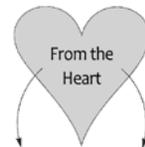
“Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.” – Prov. 4:23

Tripp asserts that a simple change of behavior is not enough. Remember, behavior does not just spring forth uncaused. Behavior - things said and done - reflects the heart. If you are to really help your child, you must be concerned with the attitudes of heart that drive behavior. Changed behavior that is not a change of heart is the same as pharisaical hypocrisy.

C. Bible Study

Colossians 2:20 – 23

Colossians 3:1 – 11



Behavior Overflows
(what we say and do)

D. Questions

2. Why is it so easy to get sidetracked with behavior when issues of the heart are clearly so much more important?
3. What is wrong with a change in behavior? (only if without a change of heart)
4. If the point of discipline is to direct the heart, how does that change the approach to discipline and correction?
5. How do we set our hearts on things above?

E. Prayer Requests

- a. Suggested HW: Chapter 2



Shepherding a Child's Heart (2)

*“Two mistakes are made in interacting with the shaping influences of life.
The first is seeing shaping influences deterministically...
the second mistake is denial.”*

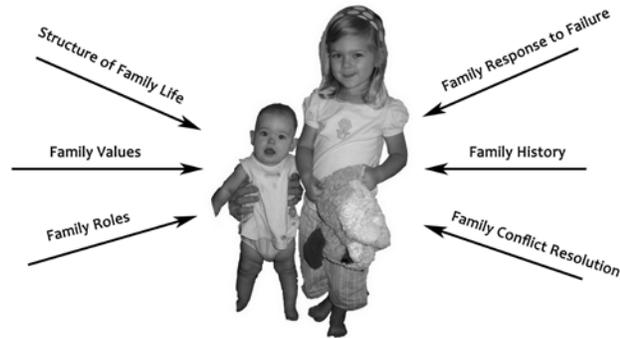
A. Introduction

1. What are some of your earliest thoughts about God?
2. Was anyone able to expose any heart issues of their kids last week?

B. Book Summary – Chapter 2

Today's chapter focuses on the shaping influences of the child. Tripp defines “shaping influences” as those events and circumstances in your children's developmental years that prove to be a catalyst for making them the person they are. But shaping is not automatic; the ways they respond to these events and circumstances determine the effect they have upon them.

Tripp states that all people, including children, respond to their shaping influences by his or her Godward (or lack thereof) orientation of his heart.



SHAPING INFLUENCES

Truth is whatever Jesus says is true.
We act on what we believe is true.

C. Bible Study

2 Kings 6: 8 – 16: 17 – 22



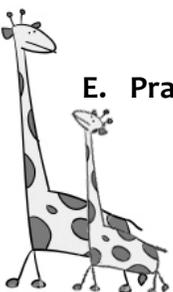
So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. -- 2 Corinthians 4:18

D. Questions

3. What were the prominent shaping influences for you growing up?
4. What constituted success or failure in your home when you were a child?
5. How are you trying to manage the shaping influences in your kids' lives?
6. How do you let Jesus interpret the events of your life?
How do you teach this to your children?

E. Prayer Requests

- Suggested Homework: Chapter 3



Shepherding a Child's Heart (3)

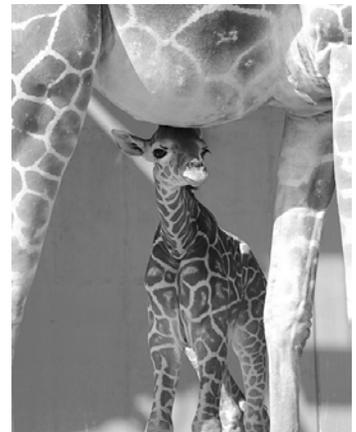
“Selfishness is not outgrown. Rebellion against authority is not outgrown. These things are not outgrown because they are not reflective of immaturity but rather of the idolatry of your child's heart.”

A. Introduction

1. What are some shaping influences you had growing up that you are now implementing for your children?
2. What is something that your family did that you did not think was weird until your spouse questioned it?

B. Book Summary – Chapter 3

Since children, as well as adults, can never be neutral in their worship, the heart decides who the person will worship. Therefore, parenting is not just providing good input, creating a happy home atmosphere, and positive interaction between parents and kids. There is another dimension – children are interacting with the living God. They are either worshiping and serving and growing in understanding of the implications of who God is, or they are seeking to make sense of life without a relationship with God. The question is not will they worship, but who will they worship.



C. Bible Study

Romans 8: 28 – 39

3. What does this passage say about Godward orientation?

You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. – Genesis 50:20

D. Questions

4. Does your child believe God loves them? How do they learn this?
5. How do you decipher between God's interpretation and sin's? How do you decipher idolatry?
6. How can you challenge the idolatry you may see within your child?
7. How can you help your kids see how they are investing themselves in things that cannot satisfy?

E. Prayer Requests

- Suggested Homework: Chapter 4



Shepherding a Child's Heart (4)

"We think of authority as derived either from overwhelming force or consent... our culture has no notion of intelligent, thinking persons willingly placing themselves under authority."

A. Introduction

1. What is the strictest discipline you received from your parents?

B. Book Summary – Chapter 4

As a parent, you have authority because God calls you to be an authority in your child's life. We are God's agents, and we are to parent our children not as we please but as it pleases God. We are both (parent and child) under God's authority – different roles but same Master. Our goal is not to get them to simply obey us as parents but to obey God by obeying us.

Discipline is a tool God has ordained to get to obedience. We are not to mix displeasure or anger with discipline else our child will learn the fear of man over the fear of God. If we see sin in our child and do not address it, then we are disobeying God.



C. Bible Study

Hebrews 12: 5 -- 11

2. What is the goal of disciplining?
3. Why do you discipline?
4. How can discipline be an act of love?

because the LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father [a] the son he delights in. -- Proverbs 3:12

D. Questions

5. What is the extent of a parent's authority?
6. How do you determine the proper discipline for your child?
7. What are your fears when it comes to discipline?



E. Prayer Requests

- Suggested Homework: Chapter 5 – 6



Shepherding a Child's Heart (5 – 6)

“If you teach your child to obey and to perform for approval from you and from others, you present an unbiblical objective.”

A. Introduction

1. How would you define successful parenting?

B. Book Summary – Chapters 5 – 6

What is your goal for your children in your parenting? Parents want children to be successful so they can ‘do well’ and live happy, comfortable lives. This wish for success has a different shape and definition for different people, but every parent wants successful, happy children. We want them to have adult lives filled with opportunity and unfettered by problems. However we define success, we wish it for our children. We are well aware that their upbringing has much to do with future success.



Tripp then outlines several unbiblical goals:

- I. Developing a special skill
- II. Developing the psyche
- III. Getting your child saved
- IV. Having well behaved children
- V. Making your child smart
- VI. Getting them to be who we are not

2. What is wrong with these goals? (start one at a time)

Q: *What is the chief end of man?*

A: *Man's chief end is to _____ and to _____.*

C. Bible Study

Romans 12:2

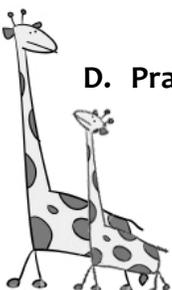
3. How do we renew our minds?

Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

-- 1 Corinthians 1:20b

D. Prayer Requests

- Suggested Homework: Chapter 7 -- form goals with spouse



Shepherding a Child's Heart (7)

“Superficial parenting that never addresses the heart biblically produces children who do not understand what makes them tick. ... They will never understand the internal struggles that lie beneath their most consistent behavior.”

A. Introduction

1. How would you define successful parenting?

B. Book Summary – Chapters 7

This chapter tackles unbiblical methods of parenting. One thing in common is the human mind is the standard. And, since these methods only address behaviors, they miss the heart. Biblical goals cannot be achieved by unbiblical methods. Another side result is they tend to produce distance between the parent and child. Here are the approaches mentioned:

- I. "I didn't turn out so bad"
- II. Pop Psychology
 - a. Bribery and Contracts (appeal to greed)
 - b. Behavior Modification (manipulation)
- III. Emotionalism (appeal to fear and shame)
- IV. Punitive Correction (spanking – grounding)
 - Not designed to do something for the child; designed to do something against
- V. Inconsistency



C. Bible Study

Galatians 4:21 – 26; 28 - 31

2. What was Abraham promised?
3. How was he told it would happen?
4. What was wrong with son through Hagar?
5. How do we raise children of promise?
 - *There is a way that seems right to a man,*
 - *but in the end it leads to death. -- Proverbs 14:12*

D. Questions

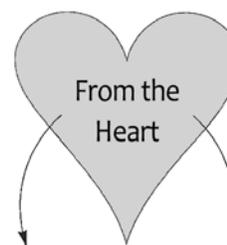
6. What is the point of this chapter?
7. What is the purpose of sin in our lives?

E. Prayer Requests

- Suggested Homework: Chapter 8 (parenting goals next week)



What are you addressing?



Behavior Overflows
(what we say and do)

Shepherding a Child's Heart (8)

“Most parent-child communication is the parents tell their kids what to do, and the kids tell the parents their wishes and dreams.”

A. Introduction

1. Share parenting goals.

B. Book Summary – Chapters 8

Chapter 8 is the first of three chapters on communication. Tripp outlines his view of biblical methods as communication and the rod. With three chapters on communication, he provides an emphasis on rich communication that prohibits cold, strict discipline. Our objective must be to understand our children, not simply have them understand us. Therefore our first object to discipline is to try to understand what is going on inside them – the nature of the struggle they are having. We are helping our children learn to express themselves. It provides the context in which they can be known and which they can know themselves.

Questions to think through in correction:

- I. What is the specific content of the abundance of the heart in this circumstance?
- II. What was the temptation?
- III. What was my child trying to accomplish?
- IV. What was his/her response to that temptation?



C. Bible Study

John 4:7 – 15; 16 – 26

2. What does Jesus' first question accomplish?
3. What does His next statement accomplish (v.10)?
4. What does His statement in verse 16 accomplish?
5. What does His statement in verses 17-18 accomplish?
6. What can we learn about parenting in this passage?

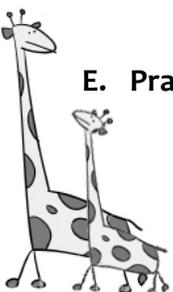
*The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters,
but a man of understanding draws them out. -- Proverbs 20:5*

D. Questions

7. What are some good questions to ask our children to draw them out?

E. Prayer Requests

- Suggested Homework: Chapter 9-10



Shepherding a Child's Heart (9 - 10)

“A regular habit of talking together prepares the way for talking in strained situations. You will never have the hearts of your children if you only talk to them when something has gone wrong.”

A. Introduction

1. Share parenting goals.

B. Book Summary – Chapters 9 – 10



A wise parent talks when the kids are in the mood. Our children's questions and comments reveal their hearts. In these times, when their conscience is stirred, you need to talk to them. They need to learn how to communicate to understand life and to succeed in every relationship they will ever have. Communication is the art of expressing in godly ways what is in our hearts and of hearing completely and understanding what another thinks and feels.

We must regard parenting as one of our most important tasks while the children are at home. We will have to say no to other things, but nothing is more important.

2. How would you define each of the items in the chart?
3. Give an example where Jesus did each with Peter.

Rules
Correction
Discipline

Encouragement, Correction,
Rebuke, Entreaty, Teaching,
Warning, Prayer

C. Bible Study

John 21: 15 – 22

4. Who was gaining information from these questions (Jesus / Peter)?
5. What are the “these” Jesus refers to in the first question?
6. What was the purpose of Jesus' answers to Peter?

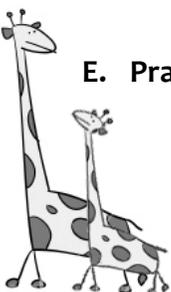
The wise in heart are called discerning, and pleasant words promote instruction. -- Proverbs 16:21

D. Questions

7. If “out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks” (Luke 6:45), how can our words overflow from God's heart and not the selfishness in ours?

E. Prayer Requests

- Suggested Homework: Chapter 11 – 12



Shepherding a Child's Heart (11 - 12)

“Recognizing that in discipline there is hope and refusing to be a willing party to your child's death, the parent undertakes the task [of discipline]. It is an expression of love and commitment.”

A. Introduction

1. How were you disciplined growing up?
2. What is your greatest fear of disciplining?

B. Book Summary – Chapters 11 – 12

Children are not born morally neutral. The use of the rod signifies a faithful parent recognizing the child's dangerous state and employing a God-given remedy. The issue is the child's need to be rescued from death – the result of rebellion in the heart left unchallenged.

Properly administered discipline humbles the heart of the child, making them subject to parental instruction. It produces a compliance ready to receive life-giving words. The rod is not payment for sins but a warning of greater negative consequences that sin produces.

No matter inconvenient childishness is not a cause for discipline.

3. How would you define the rod?

C. Bible Study

Proverbs 13:24; 19: 18; 22:15; 23: 13 – 14; 29:15, 17; 3:11 – 12

4. What are some of your observations from these verses?
5. What do you see as the purpose of disciplining in Proverbs?

*“Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline.
So be earnest, and repent.” – Revelation 3:19*

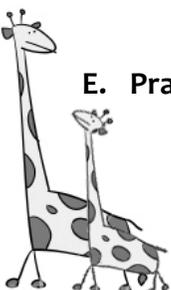
D. Questions

6. What role does fear have in discipline?



E. Prayer Requests

- Suggested Homework: Chapter 13 – 15



Shepherding a Child's Heart (catch-up)

*Our children are God's special gifts to us.
Nobody is better suited to be their parents than we are.*

1. What is the purpose of having kids?
2. What is the chief end of man?
3. How does having kids play into this?
4. Read Psalm 127: 3 – 4
5. How are children a blessing from the Lord?
6. What role does fear play in regards to discipline?



“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.” – James 1: 17



“If only I'd known that my daughter herself would teach me all I needed to know. If only I'd understood the obvious truth that I couldn't be a father on my own, but only with the help of a child. I needed a child's love. I needed to love a child and, just as important, I needed to soak up her love for me. I needed to experience firsthand how different is the love of a child, how different it is from everything else in the world, before I could begin to grasp what Jesus meant by saying, 'Become like this.'”

-- Mike Mason, *The Mystery of Children*



Shepherding a Child's Heart (13 - 15)

“The period from infancy to childhood can be described in a single word – change. There is rapid change in physical, social, intellectual, and spiritual areas of the child.”

A. Introduction

1. When does a child need a spanking?

B. Book Summary – Chapters 13 – 15

The important lessons to teach preschoolers is 1.) God made them and loves them very much, and 2.) they are individuals under authority. God has created a system where we are protected as we stay under the umbrella of authority that He designed. For children they are blessed as they obey their parents. When they step out into disobedience, they become vulnerable to the attacks of sin and the enemy. Discipline is a rescue mission (Prov. 22:15).

While requiring obedience, allowing our children a chance to appeal provides a learning experience for them. It also allows you to change your mind and your child a chance to be heard.

2. How do you define obedience for your child?
3. How does Tripp's say parents should spank?
4. What dangers must be avoided in the appeal process?

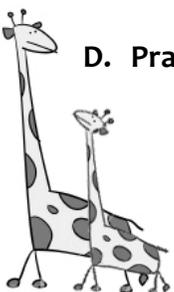


C. Bible Study

Matthew 8: 5 – 13

5. What was the Centurion's faith in?
6. How does this relate to these chapters in Shepherding a Child's Heart?

- *“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.” – Galatians 6:7*



D. Prayer Requests