

## The Reward of Parenting in Christ

### I. God gives everyone talents to use in their parenting.

- Matthew 25:14-30
- God has given us the Holy Spirit, the Bible, and absolutely everything we need for life and godliness — that includes everything we need to parent in a way that pleases Him.

### II. There are two ways to react to the talents God gives parents.

- We can put the talents to work, or we can bury them.
- Can you stand confidently at this moment and say that you are wisely investing everything God has given you?
  - God has given us His Word. The Bible contains absolutely everything we need to know to parent well. There's not a parenting conundrum that's not addressed within the pages of Scripture because even when it doesn't speak specifically to what to say or do in a unique parenting situation, it gives us everything we need to *know* for how to address it.
  - But good parenting isn't merely the memorization of Truth. In and of ourselves we are impotent to glorify God by wisely living out His expectations.
  - That's why God has also given us the Holy Spirit. Are you relying entirely on the Holy Spirit to parent well? Are you resting on His grace and empowerment? Do you pray for wisdom and strength before tackling an issue with your kids? Do you strive to make the Fruit of the Spirit the very groundwork of your parenting?
  - Too many parents drop their Scriptures and the gift of the Holy Spirit into a parenting hole. They speak of worldly pursuits with their kids and utilize fleshly consequences to achieve temporal ends. The Spiritual realities of this world are rarely invested into their parenting.
  - They may invoke God's name and expectations in a time of crisis. They may turn to the church to fill in all that God-stuff, but they don't invest their greatest resources — the Bible and their relationship with God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit — into the family warp and woof of their parenting. God and His Word have just as much value if your daughter has gotten pregnant outside of marriage as it does if your son won't stay in his crib. We need to invest just as much Scripture into why our kids have to hold our hands crossing the street as we do preparing them to answer the evolutionist's lies in their public school.

### III. Not having someone else's talents doesn't justify burying what we have.

- Please don't reject your investment simply because you look around and realize you don't have all the same resources that others have.
- Everyone can look around and — with little effort — find someone who appears to have more spiritual maturity and equipping than they have. That's not the point. The point is that the master gave each individual exactly what they needed . . . and He expected them to do more with it.
- It's a lie of Satan that you can't parent to the glory of God if you don't have as many talents as the parent down the street or the author of the parenting book or the pastor or the counselor. That is an absolute lie!
- God expects you to use His Word and parent in the power of the Holy Spirit just like everyone else. Sure, you may not know as much Bible as Jon MacArthur or Charles Spurgeon, but that doesn't mean you don't need to use it in your parenting? That doesn't mean that God doesn't want you to grow and mature in your understanding and use of the Scriptures.

#### IV. The reward of parenting in Christ is identical to the purpose and empowerment of parenting in Christ.

- We are to invest our talents because God commands us to.
- Therefore, our highest reward for parenting in Christ must — and can only be — His favor.
- Too many of us are trying to parent well for all the wrong reasons. We want good kids, obedient kids, kids who will eat their food and take their naps and be kind to their siblings. And though we have far better chances of helping our kids achieve those goals only when we parent to God's glory . . . having our kids achieve those goals absolutely must not be our main goal.
- As Ambassadors of Christ, we must have as our chief goal and ultimate purpose the glory of God. We want Him to be pleased with us.
- It's sad to imagine, but — God forbid — if we invest all of our talents into our parenting for nothing more than God's glory and honor, and our kids still rebel against Him, we will have been victorious in our parenting. But if you don't believe that. If you see your children's maturity and success as the most important thing, if you wouldn't have had kids and done the hard work of parenting if you knew they were going to reject God, then you have just learned something very important about yourself.
  - You just learned that you're an idolator who's been burying his talents in the dirt. You haven't been parenting in Christ and to Christ for nothing more than Christ, you've substituted your own cause and course. You dropped the Scriptures and empowerment of the Holy Spirit into a hole to pursue your own earthly goals.
  - And do you remember what motivated that slave's response? He hid his talents out of fear. But God has not given us a spirit of fear. We can be fearless parents!
  - But if we're substituting God's best for our own silly plans, we're doing it because we're afraid God's will isn't good enough. And that realization should give us pause.
  - Why is the lazy slave thrown out into utter darkness? Because he wasn't really a servant of the master. A servant would have done his master's bidding, but this man did the exact opposite.
  - A man or woman who parents in Christ will use His Word and utilize the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. A parent who refuses to use the Scriptures and doesn't ever act in the strength of the Spirit does so only because they aren't really in Christ.
  - The true reward of parenting in Christ comes only from doing all of the right things in the right ways for the right reasons in the right power, and the reward is pleasing the Lord and enjoying Him for all eternity.
- If we're parenting in Christ, if we're using the Scripture in our every parenting endeavor, if we're resting on the Holy Spirit to accomplish His purposes in our children, then we will be teaching them and reproving them and correcting them and training them in Christ so that they may know Him and love Him and follow Him. That is obviously *one* of our goals, but it shouldn't be our main goal, and it definitely shouldn't be our only goal.
- Man parents wouldn't expect to learn that the reward of following God's counter-intuitive commands as they parent the often uncomfortable neighbors living in your home has everything to do with your relationship with God and nothing to do with their children . . . but that's the Truth.
- We have no control over our kids' choices. We do — however — have complete control over whether or not we're going to invest the spiritual gifts we have into our parenting so that we may hear our Lord say, "*Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.*"