

Guiltless Parenting

I. Introduction

Samples of things parents have a ton of guilt about: _____

Birth choices, infant feeding, pacifiers, TV watching, working outside the home, schooling, when to start schooling, diet and food selections etc.

II. What is it?

- A. Definition of guilt: A feeling of responsibility or remorse for some offense, crime or wrong doing. It can be real or imagined. It can be healthy or unhealthy.
- B. The source of our guilt:
 - 1. Society
 - 2. Family background
 - 3. The “group” we belong to (neighbors, peers in college, “bunco buddies”, church friends)
 - 4. God

III. How do we handle it?

- A. Determine what kind of guilt (sorrow) you have. Look at 2 Cor. 7:9-11 and consider “Godly sorrow.”
Is it real? Then confess it, make amends, change your behavior and move on! (Heb. 12:11 and John 16:6-20)
Is it perceived? Ignore it!
- B. Be honest with yourself...you are not perfect (Rom. 3:23). Quit trying to act like you are.
- C. Monitor your emotions
Guilt is an emotion that needs to be monitored and clarified
- D. Pick a realistic standard by which to compare yourself. God’s standard for parenting is the only standard that makes sense.

IV. Consider God’s standard

Amazon has 15,000 titles available on the topic of parenting and family

God's word has over 31,000 verses. But only about 30 directly speak to parenting issues.

The principles of parenting might be captured in these verses:

- A. Recognize that children are a gift from the Lord. Look at 1 Sam. 1:3-28, 2:1-11
 Ps. 127:3 "Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from Him."
 Ps. 139:13 "...you (God) knit me together in my mother's womb"
- B. Choose to be a spiritual example for your children
 2 Tim.1:5 "...Faith like that of your mother Eunice and your grandmother Lois..."
- C. Diligently teach them the precepts of the Lord
 Deut. 4:9-10; Deut. 6:9; Deut. 11:18-19
- D. Love them!
 Titus 2:3-5, I Thess. 2:7
 I Thess. 2:11 "For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God."
 Encourage: "called to come alongside"
 Comfort: "words alongside"
 Urge to live lives worthy of God: to "bear witness, to testify to the truth of"
- E. Manage your household, discipline your children
 I Tim. 3:4-5, 12; Titus 1:6, Proverbs 19:18, 22:15
 Proverbs 23:13-14 "Do not withhold discipline from a child..."
- F. Don't exasperate them.
 Eph. 6:4 "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."

V. So what?: II Peter 3:11-14 “...what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and Godly lives...so then, dear friends since you are looking forward to this (the second coming of the Lord), make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with Him.”

The Result: Godly offspring, and guiltless parents!

Our prayer for our children is found in Lamentations 2:19: (“...pour out your heart like water in the presence of the Lord. Lift up your hands to him for the lives of your children.”)

Discussion Questions:

1. If you were honest with your group, from where do you feel the pressure to be the perfect parent?
2. After today’s lesson, whose standard are you going to follow or compare yourself to?