

Session 2: Basic Trust

Do you sometimes wonder if humanists are right—that man is innately good? If so, read Genesis 3.

A perfect man and woman. A perfect habitat. A perfect father. And Adam and Eve were tempted to mistrust their perfect father and regard his love as insufficient because the devil—that old snake—threw out a suggestion that “maybe they weren’t really getting all that they deserved. Their rights were being trampled.” Adam and Eve fell for it, and we’ve been falling for it since that day.

“Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.” Proverbs 22:6

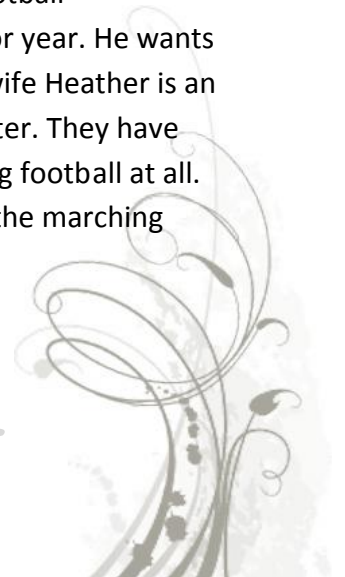
Does this mean that there is a cookie-cutter formula, and—if we follow it to a T—our children will turn out just the way we want them to? If so, maybe we’ve been listening to the snake’s twisted version of God’s words again.

If parents put the emphasis on the word SHOULD, they are thinking about themselves first, not the child. It may be like putting in an order—I want a strong, athletic boy who will end up playing in the NFL. They forget about the fact that God “created the child’s inmost being and knit the child together in the mother’s womb” (Psalm 139:13). The child may be a girl or a musician or a physicist or a farmer or all four.

Example 1

Bill was an outstanding athlete who went to college on a football scholarship who was sidelined by a serious injury in his senior year. He wants sons who will play and enjoy sports as much as he did. His wife Heather is an avid reader and an actress, still performing in the local theater. They have four athletic sons, but none of them are interested in playing football at all. The closest they got to a football field was at halftime with the marching band.

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Example 2

Katy is an extrovert who is energized by interacting with people—she is always in the middle of the group, in the center of the action. Both her daughter and her son are quiet and shy. In grade school the teachers would report that although they knew the answers, they would never raise their hand to participate in class discussions. In high school, their social interactions continue to be on the sidelines and quietly in the back row. Katy worries about them and wonders what she did wrong in raising her children.

Example 3

Kevin wants his son to be a doctor or a lawyer—respected careers that also realize good income. Son Tim wants to be a teacher in an inner city school, but he also wants to please his father. His college days are marked by periods of intense study, depression, and rebellion.

Read the verse again, and emphasize the pronoun “they.” Put your child’s or your student’s name in place of the pronoun. As you read it, focus on the child, not the “should.”

“Start Jimmy off on the way he should go, and even when Jimmy is old he will not turn from it.”

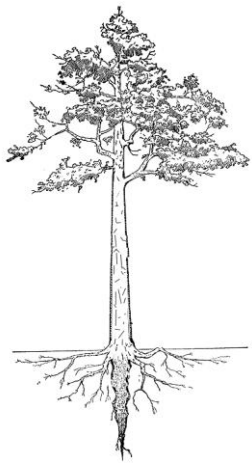
God’s design of your child is the focal point. Who is your child? What are her strengths and talents? What does he like? What does she need to learn? Parental recognition and affirmation of how a child is created builds into a celebrated life as an adult—an adult that walks with the Lord in the authenticity of self to live and honor God.

As parents, we need to die to ourselves and our plans for our children. Instead of focusing on our design, our questions should be: What is God’s blueprint for our children? What are God’s plans for them? If our children are raised to be who they are created to be, they will never depart from it.

Day 1: Sequential Stages of Spirit Growth

The first six years of a child's life is a crucial time for us to recognize and affirm who they are. A child goes through stages of development where she should be learning certain things. And what she learns during those stages, she builds on in the next learning stage. If a child doesn't learn what he needs to, he may not be able to learn the next thing in its time. This pattern is also evident in nature.

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens . . ." Ecclesiastes 3:1



A tree drops its seed into the ground, and in God's plan it will burst open in the ground, send down roots, and send up a stalk. Eventually leaves will grow on the stalk, and the stalk will thicken into a trunk. A tree is raised up in the way it should be. But what if the tree seed were to go into the ground and try to send leaves out first without growing any roots. Now you have chaos, a recipe for damage. That's also what happens when God's design for the raising of children is inverted, missed, or destroyed.

Healthy adult function is built on a foundation of sequential spiritual development. As in the growth of the tree, there are five stages of spirit development, and they correspond to the physical ages of children: basic trust, independence, initiative, peer age, and teens.

However, mental age and chronological age do not always line up. Chronological age marks the years of life. Mental age marks the amount of time it takes to

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learn what is needed in a given period. For example, some children may learn basic trust in six months, and some are working at it until they are three years old.

Progressing through the stages at top speed is not necessarily the object. Thorough learning what is important. When we come to understand basic trust, we can successfully learn independence. However, if we don't learn to trust, learning independence will be thwarted in many ways. We need to learn fully at each stage or the trees we grow into will bear damaged fruits that reveal what we are missing.

Look at the first years of your life to see what happened there. Were those stages completed in their time period or not? We are looking for the primary roots of who we are.

REVIEW

Roots are the underground part of a seed plant body and are the organs of consumption, aeration, and food storage. They also act as structural anchorage and support the plant.

The spiritual definition of roots is similar: structures that support one's spiritual outlook on a subject or dimension of life. The roots nourish the rest of a person's life (tree) and act as structural anchors.

Spiritual roots, and physical roots, absorb either nutrients or toxins from the soil in which they are planted. The soil can be God, others, or the world.

Bitter roots are an incapacity to drink nurture from God, ourselves, others, and nature. Worse yet, a bitter root has the ability to absorb harm from its environment. When we are anchored by bitter roots, we prevent God from bringing the good and manage to drink harm from other people.

WHAT IS BASIC TRUST?

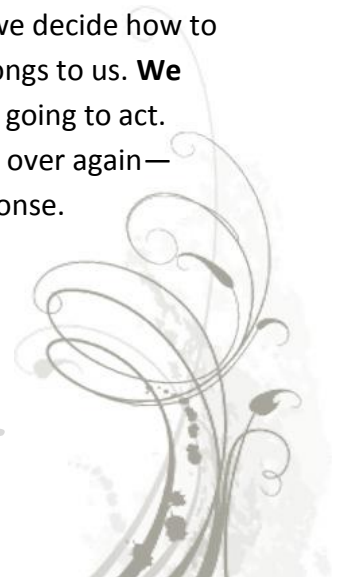
Basic trust is:

- The capacity to hold our hearts open to others even if they wound us.
- The ability to bounce back and recover quickly when we are wounded.
- A basic security in who we are. “Everything may not be going the way I want it to, but I’m okay.”
- Self confidence and the freedom from the tyranny of what other people think of us.
- The courage needed to enter freely into the give and take of human relationships.
- The ability to center decisions within ourselves and not be controlled or manipulated by others.
- The capacity to become a human being who can relate to others spirit-to-spirit with respect, honor, and love.
- The capacity to have a true conscience at the root of our being, rather than compliance.
- The ability to entrust our hearts to God.
- The capacity to have wise boundaries in our relationships with others.
- The power to keep our hearts from judging its caretakers.

By understanding the needs of life’s stages, we can pinpoint when life judgments were formed. We can restore the basic trust which was missing at that age. Our parents’ actions may make it hard to form basic trust, but ultimately **we are responsible for our own reactions**—that’s the important thing.

Remember, the purpose of taking a close look at our early years is not to play a blame game—“It’s all dad’s fault.” As a Christian, we know that we have a personal spirit, a God-given design. Within that personal spirit we decide how to react to the parents who raised and formed us. So the guilt belongs to us. **We decide.** No matter what our parents did, we decide how we are going to act. Because of that we are either blessed or guilty. It’s Genesis 3 all over again—Adam and Eve had the perfect father, but they chose their response.

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Why do some finish well and others not so well? What was God's role in their development? What was their responsibility in their flourishing?

There are critical incidents in our lives through which God shapes us. Robert Clinton explains this with the formula¹ below:

$$L = f(p, t, r)$$

Life, function, process, time, response

*(God's processing or shaping activity in a person's life, over time,
and a person's response to God's shaping action.)*

We are guilty, but not condemned. Our guilt is the halfway step to freedom. We are guilty for the judgments we make against our parents. Now, let's move to forgiveness and freedom.

DIGGING IN

Go through the basic trust list above. Check off the areas where you struggle. Pray and ask God to show you what you need to know to name, forgive, and accept responsibility for, then move into the freedom of basic trust.

VISUALIZE IT

Make a list or draw pictures to show some scenes from your family life, then and now.

Day 2: The Creation and Destruction of Basic Trust

STAGE 1: BASIC TRUST



“Yet you brought me safely from my mother’s womb and led me to trust you at my mother’s breast.” Psalm 22:9, NLT

Trust is learned early in life while we are totally reliant on our mothers and fathers—by their warm and gentle affection, their tender care.

“Instead, I have calmed and quieted myself, like a weaned child who no longer cries for its mother’s milk. Yes, like a weaned child is my soul within me.” Psalm 131:2, NLT

What does this mean? A child who is no longer nursing still comes to his mother’s lap and snuggles, totally contented and relaxed, trusting that this is a safe and loving place to be—a place where he is always welcome and comforted. That’s the basis for trust.

The mother begins nurturing while carrying the child in her womb for nine months and by feeding, caring, and comforting after birth. The father joins in with strong and gentle arms to receive the baby from the mother, to provide security, to delight in the person born into their family.

“Fathers, don’t exasperate your children by coming down hard on them. Take them by the hand and lead them in the way of the Master.” Ephesians 6:4, The Message

Fathers, this verse is for you. It is crucial that you fulfill your role—you are also involved in the nurturing and creation of trust. Interact, hold, respond, lead, instruct—they all build basic trust in your child. And basic trust is a building block, an important cornerstone, to character and spiritual development.

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Sometimes this means that fathers need to go against cultural norms in order to interact with their children in the same way that Jesus did.

SCRIPTURE BREAK

Copy, write in your own words, or draw a picture that illustrates the meaning of the text below.

Mark 10:14

What does it look like when basic trust is lacking?

- You can't feel God's presence.
- You can't meet other people spirit to spirit.
- You have generalized anxiety.
- You become performance oriented—you must perform to earn love instead of knowing that you are loved because you exist.
- You are either compliant or aggressively domineering. You exhibit a lack of give and take in relationships.

DIGGING IN

Go through the list above. Are these characteristics present in you or in someone close to you? If so, ask questions and provoke memories of the first two or three years of life. What were the circumstances? How was affection shown and received.

STAGE 2: LEARNING INDEPENDENCE



Between the ages of two and four a child takes great satisfaction in saying the word “NO.” The child is telling the parent: “I am me. I am not you. You are not me. I am my own person, and I have ideas of my own.” John Sandford says it this way:²

“It is important for parents to give the child freedom to say no without harsh discipline. A child needs the freedom to venture away from and return to consistently affectionate parents. When they are disciplined, it needs to be fair and loving. The parent needs to understand what that little child is saying—he’s not just trying to be ornery. She’s saying, ‘I have some ideas of my own; can you hear them?’”

Parents can feel threatened when their child says “no.” Excluding dangerous situations, what is your response in that situation? “No child of mine will ever tell me no!” “When I tell you something, I expect instant obedience.” Learning to be your own person, to know who you are, setting boundaries—all require the ability to say “no” at appropriate times and in certain situations. If, as a parent, you don’t allow an opportunity to say “no” or if “no” results in frightening repercussions from a giant (an adult compared to a child), you are crushing part of your child’s spirit.

When a child begins saying “no,” it is actually a sign that you did your task in the first time period. You gave your child enough love that he has the courage to say “no.” And if love has been there no matter what, he will have the courage to wander away a distance and know that Mom and Dad are still going to be there for him, a safe place to return to if he gets in trouble.

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What are adult issues that can come as a result of never learning independence?

- Conformity—do what everyone else is doing.
- A lack of self worth
- Confusion in identity.
- Lack of discipline.
- Inability to interact in relationships, instead is compliant or dominant.
- Enters into codependent relationships—finds worth by relating to somebody who is strong.

SCRIPTURE BREAK

Read the texts below. Choose one to copy, write in your own words, or draw a picture to illustrate its meaning.

Deuteronomy 6:4-7

Ephesians 6:1-4

Luke 18:16-17

DIGGING IN

Is John Sandford advocating never saying “no” your child?

What kinds of situations demand obedience?

Are there situations where a “no” response from your child could be appropriate?

Can your child come back to you after having said “no” and be assured of your love?

If your adult child exhibits some of the traits on the previous page, are you willing and able to delve into the first years of his life (on your own and with him/her) to help untangle and name hidden issues?

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Day 3: Building Blocks for Relationships

STAGE 3: INITIATIVE



Initiative is the capacity to enter into relationships. Will your child be a doormat or an aggressor?

At first children just play alongside others, but as they develop further, they become aware of others in their spirit. And as they can meet others spirit to spirit, they begin to play with or interact with another child.

Initiative is that basic capacity to identify with others so as to have real communication resulting in rewarding relationships. It is a stepping out from the parent/child connection into other relationships. In order to do that, a child needs to feel secure.

How do parents create initiative in their children?

- Affirmation from parents, especially fathers, that they are loved for who they really are.

John Sandford says, "In ministering to women, we've found that what they look like physically is not the primary basis for what women think about themselves. The biggest factor in whether or not they believe they have value is what they were told by their fathers. If the father says, 'You are my princess; you are beautiful,' they believe it. If you find someone without a sense of value, you need to ask about the relationship with the father during that first five or six years. Was he able to affirm them as a child?"³

- Support by parents for group activities outside the home.

John Sandford again. “Communication is key—talk things out with your child. If he comes home with a bloody nose, don’t overreact or be negative. Ask. Listen. A parent needs to be a safe confidante when a child needs to talk about things that happen within his group.”⁴

School starts during this stage, and with it comes prolonged separation from parents. The child needs to have the security, needs to be able to trust, that there is a safe and secure place to return to each day.

A child who has developed some basic trust, independence, and initiative will have confidence when trying new things. They will overcome their shyness and fears. You will see a progression: playing alongside one another to playing with their peers; grabbing their toys from another to sharing them without being afraid they will be taken away; and playing with each other without trying to control or be compliant. But this requires learning the lessons of trust, independence, and initiative—in sequence.

What are adult issues that can come as a result of never learning initiative?

- Being self critical about failures.
- Lacking in confidence, afraid of separation from loved ones.
- Inability to experience normal separations that should occur.
- Anti-social tendencies with stunted ability for give and take in relationships.
- At the extreme level: sociopath. She can act out the role, be social and gracious, but doesn’t know how to be intimate even with those she loves or marries. He may harm people close to him—the profile of an abuser: controlling, conforming others to his level.
- He will be unable to find her destiny or purpose in life. Because his initiative is destroyed, he can’t find out what he is supposed to do for God.

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SCRIPTURE BREAK

Read the texts below. Choose one to copy, write in your own words, or draw a picture to illustrate its meaning.

Proverbs 22:6

1 Timothy 4:7, 11-16

DIGGING IN

Go through the list of adult issues from not learning initiative. Are these characteristics present in you or in someone close to you? If so, ask questions about and provoke memories of sequential development of trust, independence, and initiative in the forming years. What were the circumstances? How was affection shown and received.

STAGE 4: PEER GROUP



When a child is six to twelve, he wants to go out and be a part of a group around his own age. This pilgrimage away from home is a stage of developing belongings outside of the home and in relationships that may oppose family values. This can cause a lot of stress and worry to the parents.

Basic trust, independence, and initiative give ability to the child to say “no” and “yes” appropriately to the gang. When development is sequential and strong, when mothers and fathers are present and able to model and teach morality, children begin to be moral by copying their parents. A conscience starts to be formed.

SCRIPTURE BREAK

Read the texts below. Choose one to copy, write in your own words, or draw a picture to illustrate its meaning.

Proverbs 4:1-5, 10-13, 20-23

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What is needed to create confidence and capability among peers?

- Continued affection at home and the courage to stand up and feel okay about herself whether or not she is accepted by the group.
 - Support and guidance by parents as the grown child forms friendships and compares value and morals of family to that of peers. Parents need to offer a listening ear, extend unconditional love, be a sounding board, and be available. If children have developed through the stages of basic trust, initiative, and independence, they will be able to go through the trial and error stage and learn from it, appropriately relating to parents and peers without losing the sense of who they are as individuals.
 - Growth in the sense of personhood—this is who I am. Gain a keen sense of what is fair with both parents and peers.
 - Be able to forgive and love when life isn't fair.
 - Feel competent in some tasks and okay if not skilled in others.

What happens when these four steps (trust, independence, initiative, and peer group) don't happen in order? What affect does this have on an adult? There are many social issues.

- Taking personally things said in a group when that was not the intention of the speaker.
- Inability to compliment or affirm someone else.
- Inability to identify with another and know what the other needs to hear, resulting in inappropriate remarks.
- Easily hurt.
- Easily pushed around.
- A poor sense of what is fair.
- Doesn't offer opinions of his own, or if he does, he feels that his opinions don't matter if someone else has a different opinion.
- Has a problem with authority (feeling slighted, overlooked, trampled, etc.).
- Lives in a world of fear of rejection and does things calculated to get rejected—shoots herself in the foot.

Day 4: Who Am I? What do I believe?

STAGE 5: TEENAGERS



During teenage years, two tasks need to be accomplished:

- Individuation—know yourself as a separate entity from your parents and peers.
- Internalization—bring into yourself what you choose from what you have been given from parents, extended family, school, church, peers, circumstances . . . Do you own this? Are these your thoughts? Is this your property?

INDIVIDUATION

Parents, as far as the teenager is concerned, you are the problem here simply because you exist. She has to differentiate herself from you.

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Example

Ryan used to be very considerate of the family and all of a sudden he changes. There's only one bathroom in the house, and everyone is forced to wait around (sometimes quite frantically) because Ryan is still in there! He'll spend two hours in the bathroom without thinking at all about the needs of the rest of the family. And when he leaves the house, you'll wonder what he was doing in there. His clothes and hair look like he's on his way to a Halloween event. If you dare to say something, Ryan goes ballistic. He has to try things out—is this me? Or is this me?

Individuation does not have to become rebellion. It becomes rebellion when we, as parents, don't understand and come down too hard—we take the enterprise of learning from the child. This can be the parents' toughest lesson. You want in the worst way to give advice, but you need to zip your lip because if you don't, you take away their attempt to learn. They have to learn it themselves.

DIGGING IN

"Will there be drinking at the party tonight?" Amy rolled her eyes at her father's question, "probably." Dad looked at her for a long time and said, "Just be careful tonight, okay?" Amy went to the party. Her parents prayed. That night Amy got rip-roaring drunk, but her friends watched out for her and got her home safely. When Dad opened the door the next day he could smell the evidence of her partying. He walked in and closed the door too loudly for Amy's aching head. Amy knew he knew. Dad knew she knew he knew.

Alternate endings:

"How am I supposed to go to work on Monday and be able to hold up my head," Dad said. "I am known as a staunch Christian in this town, and my daughter acts like this. You don't think about anyone but yourself. Obviously, you cannot be trusted." Amy groans and buries her head under her pillow. "Don't think you are going to lie in bed all day. Get up and help your mother clean the house." Dad storms out and slams the door. Amy throws her pillow at the door, tries to get up, and throws up.



Today, we are experiencing a stretched period we call the teenage years—no longer children, but not quite adults. It can extend as long as the mid- to late-twenties. In Bible times, teenagers were not regarded as children, but as full-fledged adults with adult capabilities and responsibilities. The transition from childhood to adulthood was still there, but it was more compressed and what we experience as teenage angst spilled into their early adult years. We can see this transition time in Jesus' life.

“Every year Jesus’ parents went to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up to the festival, according to the custom. After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, “Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.”

“Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?” But they did not understand what he was saying to them. Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.” Luke 2: 41-51

Let’s put Jesus’ answers in today’s vernacular. “Mom, you have no business speaking to me like that. I’m an adult—quit treating me like a child. I’m following in my father’s footsteps, working at his trade.”

Then Jesus chose submission and went home with his parents—to grow in wisdom and stature.

“Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey

him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?)” 1 Timothy 3:1-5

Notice the word “children” in the text above. As Christians we have tried hard to control our teenagers, especially those of us who are in a position of authority. What we haven’t considered is that this scripture doesn’t recognize teenagers as children. Teenagers are adults—responsible for themselves—in the view of the scriptures and as they were viewed in Biblical times.

The teenage period was quite a different affair in those days.

FLAT FACES

Q: How can you tell which parents of teenagers are Christians?

A: They have flat faces (from falling on their faces in prayer).

Parents, you survived the “terrible twos.” And if you have teenagers, they survived as well. If you want to do more than survive, know this: what they need most is to feel that Dad and Mom trust them and believe in them. Often—usually—that means leaving your comfort zone behind.

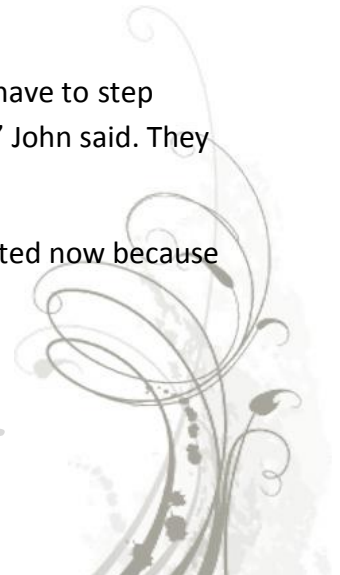
Example

John and Paula Sandford’s son Loren wanted to be the leader of rock and roll band. “This was in the time when rock and roll was considered to be of the devil—and we were pastor and wife of an evangelical, Holy Spirit-filled church. So we fell on our faces before the Lord, and he told us that we were not only to let him follow his dream, but support him.”

John and Paula went to his dances and chaperoned. “We’d have to step outside now and then to shake our ears out and go back in,” John said. They also backed him financially.

Loren, now a pastor and writer of music, says, “I can be trusted now because my Mom and Dad trusted me when I couldn’t be trusted.”⁴

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Teenagers have grown beyond the controlled children of 1 Timothy 3. Parents need to also move away from the control stage. Holding on too tightly forces them into rebellion and takes away the enterprise of learning. They need parents who are not unnerved by strange, new behaviors. They need to know that it is okay to share with the parents how they are feeling about things—about what is happening—without judging the parents for their responses. And the parents need to zip their lip, listen, and be willing to share some of their own mistakes. Give them room to learn.

What is your primary task as a parent of teenagers? Get on your knees the minute they leave the house! Teenagers today are under pressures we never even thought of at their age. What are these prayers like? It is easy to pray in a way that tries to manage God to get Him to manage our kids so they will do what we want them to do. Instead, pray for protection—physical protection.

Remember:

- Every child God the Father had, except Jesus, fell so badly into rebellion that he or she needed a savior. Does that disqualify God from being a father?
- Every disciple Jesus called deserted him, and one betrayed him. Does that disqualify Jesus from being the leader of the church?

God knew just what we do—and set us free to do it. Then he paid the price for it on the cross. The father of the prodigal knew that the prodigal would waste it all, but he paid the price of setting him free, knowing that he would fall, praying that he would come back wiser and stronger and his own person.

We are not called to be absolutely permissive parents, rules and discipline are needed and necessary. But we are called to set our children free to make their own mistakes. We want so much to protect them—we know what we did and what we went through. But we have to set them free to make mistakes knowing that they will come back wiser and stronger. If course, the father of the prodigal was praying all of the time for his son—just as we are called to do as Christian parents.

Day 5: Healing for Basic Trust Issues

Whether you are seeking healing for basic trust issues for yourself or for someone else, the process is the same.

- Think and talk about early family life. Sometimes the truth is in the details, so pay close attention to them. You will need to get past the walls of loyalty to the parents, not to belittle the parents but to get to truth. Ask questions. You want facts, not opinions.

“I know my dad loved me.”

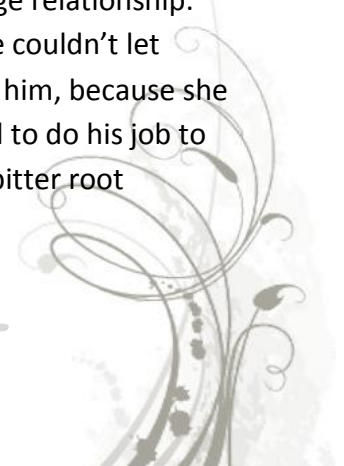
“Did he pick you up, hold you, spend time with you?”

- Trace the bitter roots and inner vows to their point of origin. Where there is bad fruit, there is bad root. Talk about family history.
- When you find the roots, it is necessary to forgive parents and siblings, even if you don't feel angry at them.

For example: Susie had a wonderful father. His job involved a lot of traveling, so he wasn't home much to protect her from the pranks of her rambunctious brothers—she had to fend for and protect herself. So she had a bitter root judgment—made early in life—that you can't trust the man to be there to protect you.

Susie's husband James was raised with the ethic that the husband is the protector of the wife—no matter what. But Susie won't allow it, doesn't want it, and resents it any time he steps into that role in any way. Susie's inner vow and bitter root defiled James and affected their relationship marriage relationship. Susie had to see by faith that she had been angry as a child. She couldn't let herself feel anger at her father because she loved and honored him, because she knew he couldn't help it that he was gone all week—he needed to do his job to support the family. She couldn't let herself feel anger. But her bitter root

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expectations affected James and their marriage even though James was innocent of any wrong-doing.

Is the point of all of this to dredge up old feelings? There are some schools of thought in psychology that we all need to get in touch with the old feelings you experience when you were a child, that this is necessary for healing. But inner healing is based on faith, not feeling.

Have you received Jesus as your Lord and Savior? Did you received him into your hearts on the basis of feelings or on the basis of faith? Feelings are great when they come along afterwards, but they are not the basis of your salvation.

In the same way, when you are ministering to the inner man, the basis is faith according to the Word of God. You track from fruits to root, and you know that if the behavior is there, the root is there. It is not necessary to relive the experience, but to see it for what it is. Then by faith, you can forgive.

- Confess and repent.

This is easier to see and do if the parents were full of vices. It's simpler to recognize your anger and resentment, admit it, and repent of it. But if you have loving parents who had failings here and there, it is very hard to recognize the truth of the situation

- Your Heavenly Father loves you. Listen to his words to his son Jesus.

And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." Matthew 3:17

Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!" Mark 9:7

- Read the text below. Confirm and celebrate your identity.

God, for whom and through whom everything was made, chose to bring many children into glory. And it was only right that he should make Jesus, through his suffering, a perfect leader, fit to bring them into their salvation.

So now Jesus and the ones he makes holy have the same Father. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them his brothers and sisters. For he said to God,

"I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters.
I will praise you among your assembled people."

He also said,

"I will put my trust in him,"
that is, "I and the children God has given me."

Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying.

We also know that the Son did not come to help angels; he came to help the descendants of Abraham. Therefore, it was necessary for him to be made in every respect like us, his brothers and sisters, so that he could be our merciful and faithful High Priest before God. Then he could offer a sacrifice that would take away the sins of the people. Since he himself has gone through suffering and testing, he is able to help us when we are being tested.

Hebrews 2:10-18

FOOTNOTES

¹ J. Robert Clinton, *Leadership Emergence Theory*, (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001) 177

² John Sandford, *Prayer Ministry*, (Spokane Valley, Elijah House School for Prayer Ministry) CD 4

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

Life in the Spirit

