

## Grace Parenting – Living Together Under the Law

*“We know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully.” ~ 1 Timothy 1:8 (ESV)*

*“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” ~ Colossians 3:16 (ESV)*

- Warm up question: What is one of your household rules?
  
- Review of our discussion of the law from last week.
  - Three uses of the law: (map, muzzle, mirror)
  - Five responses to the law:
    - Denial
    - Coverup
    - Shift focus/blame
    - Run *from* God
    - Run *to* God
      - *1 John 1:9 – If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
      - *Hebrews 4:16 – Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*
  
- How, then, do we parent with grace?
  - Problems with a formulaic approach:
  
  - Hope for parenting with grace?
    - Biblical guidance *is* given (the law as a map):
  
    - Promises of scripture:
      - *Philippians 4:13 – “I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”*
      - *2 Peter 1:3 – “By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence.” 2 Peter 1:3 (NLT)*

- What does it look like to establish and live in the goodness of God's law in our individual households?
  - A spectrum of law (and adherence to the law)

**Lawlessness:**

Absence of law and enforcement  
(laziness or abuse of grace)

**Excessive lawmaking:**

Excessive creation of law and strict enforcement  
(absence of grace)

- Household rules, rightly established, reflect and point toward the law of God.
  - God's law and guidelines:
    - 10 Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17)
    - Other guiding principles
      - Love God, love neighbor (Luke 10:25-28)
      - Rules for holy living (Colossians 3:12-17)
  - Within those rules there is some freedom and room for differences.
    - Children are commanded to obey parents, and therefore household rules.
    - Be careful to establish household rules that are in line with God's law!
- How can we serve as God's ambassadors when establishing/enforcing household rules?
  1. Make the law and expectations clearly known.
  2. Be lead lovers of the law and live a life of obedience.
  3. Be consistent in living under the law.
  4. Hold one another accountable.
  5. Discipline is appropriate (and expected!) when someone disobeys God's law.
  6. Remember the grace of forgiveness and of freedom from (ultimate) punishment.
  7. Pray together and be assured of restoration. Remind them who they are in Christ.
- The benefits of living in a household run under the principles of God's law reach all ages and stages.

- Time for reflection:
  - Read the passages mentioned before that point toward guidelines for the law in our homes (see scripture sheet).
  - Think back to your original household rule – how does your rule align with God’s law? Can it serve as a signpost for a greater understanding of God’s gracious rule in our lives?
  
  - If this household law is violated, how would that play out? How can both the justice and grace of Jesus enter this process? Try to be specific (scenarios, language, etc...).

**Application Questions / Next Steps --**

1. Take a moment now to reflect on this morning. How are you feeling about your role as Jesus’ ambassador in the life of your children? Are there areas of your lawmaking and law enforcing you need to re-examine?
  
2. Outside the intensity of the moment, think back over a recent exchange with a child in a moment of disobedience and discipline. Be honest about the state of your heart at the time and, as best you can discern it, the state of your child’s heart. Given the opportunity again, would you change your language or approach?
  
3. To be better equipped to lead through God’s law, we ourselves need to be in it (to better know and serve the one for whom we are serving as ambassadors). If it isn’t a pattern already, how could this become a more regular rhythm of your days?
  
4. Above all, pray, being reminded of God’s complete sufficiency (and our insufficiency) to cover our sins, the sins of our children, and to “lead you (us) in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.” (Psalm 23) He alone can change hearts and is eager for us to ask him to do so.

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“While sin is still a sad and ever-present reality in each of our lives, it is simply no match for the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.” – Paul Tripp, *New Morning Mercies*, November 9

## **MTB Scriptures 11-16-17**

### **Exodus 20:1-17**

<sup>1</sup> And God spoke all these words:

<sup>2</sup> "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

<sup>3</sup> "You shall have no other gods before<sup>[a]</sup> me.

<sup>4</sup> "You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.<sup>5</sup> You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, <sup>6</sup> but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

<sup>7</sup> "You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

<sup>8</sup> "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. <sup>9</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>10</sup> but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. <sup>11</sup> For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

<sup>12</sup> "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

<sup>13</sup> "You shall not murder.

<sup>14</sup> "You shall not commit adultery.

<sup>15</sup> "You shall not steal.

<sup>16</sup> "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

<sup>17</sup> "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

### **Luke 10:25-28**

<sup>25</sup> On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

<sup>26</sup> "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

<sup>27</sup> He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

<sup>28</sup> "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

### **Colossians 3:12-17**

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. <sup>13</sup> Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.<sup>14</sup> And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

<sup>15</sup> Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup> Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. <sup>17</sup> And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.