A Prayer for Parents February 16, 2020

*Judges 13:1-8 Series: Seeking the Face of God*

It's not better teachers, texts, or curricula that our children need most; it's better childhoods, and we will never see lasting school reform until we see parent reform. — Samuel Sava

Intro: Could we be helping our children win the wrong race?

1. Pray for your parenting because your wisdom isn’t enough.
2. Without God, we don’t know how much we don’t know.

v. 1 *the people of Israel again did what was evil*

v. 1 *the LORD gave them into the hand of the Philistines*

Judges 15:11 *Then 3,000 men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam, and said to Samson, “Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us? What then is this that you have done to us?”*

Romans 1:28 *And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.*

1. We’re often unprepared for a higher standard of parenting.

vv. 3-4 *Behold, you are barren and have not borne children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. Therefore be careful …*

v. 4 *drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean*

v. 7 *the child shall be a Nazirite to God*

1. We need prayer for ourselves at least as much as for our children.

v. 8 *Manoah prayed to the LORD and said, “O Lord, please let the man of God whom you sent come again to us and teach us what we are to do with the child who will be born.”*

* Why is it so hard to be a godly parent when you live in a ‘Romans 1:28 world?’
* Do you believe parents need to pray at least as much about their parenting as their children? Why/why not?
* How many of the Bible’s basic instructions to parents can you list as a group? How much focus have you given to implementing them?

1. Pray for your parenting because your child’s success isn’t enough.
2. A bright future is a dangerous thing to put your trust in.

Judges 13:24 *And the woman bore a son and called his name Samson. And the young man grew, and the LORD blessed him.*

Samson means “sunshine” or “like the sun.”

1. Your child’s talent and success don’t equal blessing.

Judges 14:19 *And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon and struck down thirty men of the town and took their spoil …*

Judges 15:15 *And he found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, and put out his hand and took it, and with it he struck 1,000 men.*

1. Moral and spiritual choices can ruin talent and success.

Judges 16:1 *Samson went to Gaza, and there he saw a prostitute, and he went in to her.*

Judges 16:4 *After this he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.*

* In what sense did Samson start off with the life that every parent wants for their child?
* What are some indications that we don’t believe that our child’s moral and spiritual choices will ruin their talent and success?

1. Pray for God’s will for your parenting because your child’s happiness isn’t enough.
2. Your response to a child’s ‘Mine!’ is a rehearsal for adulthood.

Judges 14:2 *Then he came up and told his father and mother, “I saw one of the daughters of the Philistines at Timnah. Now get her for me as my wife.”*

Judges 14:3 *But his father and mother said to him, “Is there not a woman among the daughters of your relatives, or among all our people, that you must go to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?” But Samson said to his father, “Get her for me, for she is right in my eyes.”*

1. Will your child know when the Lord has withdrawn?

Judges 16:20 *And he awoke from his sleep and said, “I will go out as at other times and shake myself free.” But he did not know that the LORD had left him.*

1. Pray for your parenting with an urgency about what’s at stake.

Judges 16:21 *And the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes and brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles.*

Jesus teaches us how to wait on those who rebel.

Luke 15:20 *But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.*

* What does it mean that, “Your response to a child’s ‘Mine!’ is a rehearsal for adulthood?” How should a parent ‘rehearse?’
* How would a parent’s natural tendency differ from the response of the prodigal son’s father?
* Where do you most need prayer to respond to this passage?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study 1 Chronicles 4:9-10.

Notes