

## PRAY FOR OUR NATION

### INTRODUCE

Well, good morning church! If I haven't met you yet, my name is Chris Martin, and I'm the Lead Pastor here.

If you've got your Bibles, and I hope you do, please open them up to 1 Samuel chapter 1. 1 Samuel 1. That's where we're going to be.

We want every person to have a hand on their Bible. You can open your phone or tablet to 1 Samuel 1.

### INTRODUCTION

Today I want to talk about parenting. How do we parent? How do we even know how we're doing? It's hard to gauge this stuff...

Cause everyone has their own opinions:

- *"Oh, you've gotta read Baby Wise..."*
- *"No, no, no, it's Love and Logic."*
  - And there're hundreds of books...
  - and methods...
  - and blogs...
- So, how do we actually do this?

See, the Scriptures say that children are like arrows in a quiver...

- but how do you know
  - you're shooting them at the correct target?
- Or, what do you do if your aim is true,
  - but a gust of wind blows them off course?

So, we're gonna talk parenting today. And I'm no expert, ok?

This is like a player trying to coach a bit. Ok?

- I've got a 5-year-old daughter,
  - So, I'm right in the middle of this.
- And I was a youth pastor for 10 years,
  - So, that's a different seat on the bus,
  - but man, it still taught me some stuff.

But we've got God's Word, and this book has a lot to say about parenting.

## **DISCLAIMER**

Now, I just want to say this, we're going to talk today about some IDEALS for parenting, and I know that many of us in this church aren't living in the ideal.

- Some of you want kids...but you can't.
- Or you have kids...but they've grown and you missed your chance.
- Or you're in a situation where the deck is truly stacked against you, and you're just trying to keep your head above water.

And I just want to remind you, that while the Bible gives us some real help on how to parent, **I want you to know that where the ideal is lacking...grace abounds.**

And if you don't have kids of your own, I want to really encourage you to stay engaged because you might have a niece, or a nephew, or a grandchild, or a friend's child...and God might have you disciple and parent that child from your position.

I mean, some of the most important figures in my spiritual life

- have been men and women
- who weren't my biological parents...
- and they sometimes didn't even have kids of their own...
- but they parented me in the faith.

So, this is for all of us.

## RECAP

Now, last week we started this 1 Samuel sermon series, and we met a man named Elkanah and a woman named Hannah. And Hannah struggled with infertility.

But last week the story ended with Hannah, in God's timing, conceiving and having a baby boy named Samuel.

And we'll see that Samuel will grow up to be a VERY important and Godly player in this book...but how did he get there?

Well, I think it starts with parenting. So, let's read the end of chapter one, and I'll extrapolate some parenting principles from the text. So, here we go. 1 Samuel 1 starting in verse 21.

## 1 SAMUEL 1:21-24

[21] The man Elkanah and all his house went up to offer to the LORD the yearly sacrifice and to pay his vow. [22] But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, "As soon as the child is weaned, I will bring him, so that he may appear in the presence of the LORD and dwell there forever." [23] Elkanah her husband said to her, "Do what seems best to

you; wait until you have weaned him; only, may the LORD establish his word.” So the woman remained and nursed her son until she weaned him. [24] And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine, and she brought him to the house of the LORD at Shiloh. And the child was young.

### **EXPLAIN: WEANING**

So, since Hannah had made a Nazarite vow before having Samuel, he is to be raised at by the priests, so Hannah would have likely had him until he was about 3 years old as that was the age of weaning.

### **1 SAMUEL 1:25-28**

[25] Then they slaughtered the bull, and they brought the child to Eli. [26] And she said, “Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the LORD. [27] For this child I prayed, and the LORD has granted me my petition that I made to him. [28] Therefore I have lent him to the LORD. As long as he lives, he is lent to the LORD.”

And he worshiped the LORD there.

### **TRANSITION**

Now, Hannah and Elkanah didn't really have the opportunity to parent Samuel for very long, but I think there are some principles to draw out of this story for what Biblical Parenting can look like.

Now, this list won't be exhaustive, but I think it will be of some help.

So, here's what I've got for you: **5 principles of Biblical Parenting** from this story.

## #1 INTENTIONAL

First: **SLIDE BIBLICAL PARENTS ARE INTENTIONAL.**

I see this first point in verse 22:

- Hannah had a plan of action...
- she's going to wean Samuel,
- and then she's going to bring him up to the house of the Lord,
- and he will dwell there.
  - She has a plan.
  - She's intentional.

## APPLICATION

And we've gotta be intentional with our parenting.

- We need to be thoughtful.
- We've gotta start with the end in mind.

The truth is:

- **if you don't pick an end in mind, one will be picked for you.**
- **Unintentional choices have unintentional consequences.**
- **When you fail to plan, you plan to fail.**

You see, in Joshua 24:15 we find a call to the people of Israel to make an intentional decision about how their families will go:

## **SLIDE JOSHUA 24:15**

[15] And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” **BLANK SLIDE**

You have to make an intentional decision about how you want to parent, and how you and your house will go.

## **INTENTIONAL BOUNDARIES**

Here are a couple areas of intentionality:

**BIBLICAL PARENTS ARE INTENTIONAL WITH BOUNDARIES.**

What are you kids going to be allowed to do and not?  
And one of the hot button issues in parenting right now is technology.

Ordinary parents don't want to pry.

- They want to make sure kids have their space.
- Let them do them.
- We call this free-range parenting.

But biblical parents are intentional about boundaries with technology.

If your kid has a phone, please, know your kid's phones.

- Know what apps they have.
- Use the safety measures to pry into what they're looking at.

- We are only just scratching the surface
- on the potential dangers of these things...
  - and I find it truly interesting
  - that the people who make these devices
  - don't let their kids have them.

A phone or tablet with no boundaries on it is like handing them a loaded gun. It's dangerous.

Also, please, know who your kid's friends are. I have had so many conversations with young adults who have stories like,

- *"I was in the 5th grade and I stayed at a friend's house, and his older brother..."*
- *"I was in the 4th grade, and when my friend's parents went to bed, we hopped on their computer and saw this..."*
- *"Man, I was in middle school when I got my first phone, and I was just scrolling when these pictures popped up, and I got hooked."*
- *"And it was 5th grade, 4th grade, 3rd grade...and I still can't shake this..."*

And I also hear it all the time...

- *"I wish my parents would have pried more..."*
  - *I mean, I didn't want it at the time...*
  - *But now, I wish they had."*

Biblical parents are intentional with boundaries for their kids.

## **INTENTIONAL DISCIPLINE**

Another area of intentionality:

**BIBLICAL PARENTS ARE ALSO INTENTIONAL WITH DISCIPLINE.**

And I'm telling you, there's a fad going with some parents who have become convinced that it is **MORE IMPORTANT** to let your child explore and figure out his or her identity than it is to train your child to maturity. And I fear this is destroying a generation!

And I get it.

- I want my daughter to like me.
- Not just love me;
- I want her to like me.

**But God's first call on my life is to be her father; it's NOT to be her friend!**

- It's to have her best in mind even when it makes me unpopular with her.
- And that means that sometimes I'll look, to her eyes, as the enemy.

**Listen, love and discipline are synonymous.**

It takes a higher degree of love to discipline my daughter for her own maturity and own safety.

## **ILLUSTRATION: HITTING**

Now, every parent knows that disciplining your kid is way harder than just letting them do whatever they want!

- And we're trying to intentionally discipline Harper...
- but it's really difficult.



So, when Harper was three, we had a rule: hands are not for hitting.

- And very often she would start hitting the dog,
- and we'd have to say, "*Harper, hands are not for hitting!*"

And we were training her, ok? **So, when she didn't know something was wrong, it's always grace and education.**

- So, I would say once, "*Harper. Hands are not for hitting.*"
- And then if she did it again, "*Harper, don't hit the puppy.*"
- And then if she did it a third time, I would say very clearly,
  - "*Harper Ruth, if you hit the dog again,*
  - *You're getting a spanking.*"

And I get the irony that I'm threatening her with a hit in response for hitting.

- But warnings were issued.
- Punishment clearly communicated.
- She knows the rule,
- and to break it again would be defiant disobedience.

So, here's what she does:

- she walks away,
- finds a broom,
- brings it into the room,
- looks at me,
- and starts hitting the dog with the broom.

And I'm like,

- *"Dang it!"*
- *Why wasn't I clearer?*
- *She's not using her hands.*
- *She's using the stick!*
- *She's finding the loophole already.*
- *I love her, but she's shady already!"*

## APPLICATION

But we give timeouts! And she loses privileges. And get spankings. And it's BECAUSE we love her THAT we discipline her. It is! We're intentional with it.

And here's just a tip: don't go,

- *"Hey sweetie, I really don't want to do this.*
- *I don't enjoy this.*
- *This hurts me more than it hurts you.*
- *But God tells me that I have to, so..."*

As if that's gonna get them to love God more, right?

No, I ACTUALLY want to discipline her. Why?

- **Because I am crazy about her.**
- And I want it to go well for her.
- And when she breaks God's commands
- she isn't on the path towards his best for her.

So, Biblical Parenting is intentional.

## #2 DISCIPLESHIP

Number two: **SLIDE BIBLICAL PARENTS PRIORITIZE THEIR OWN DISCIPLESHIP.**

- All over this text we find this family actively practicing their faith
  - They're going up to the make offerings to the Lord.
  - They're praying.
  - They're worshipping.

And Elkanah's words in verse 23 resound: "only, may the Lord establish his word." It would seem that Hannah and Elkanah are MOST concerned about their faith.

**It is out of our discipleship with God that we disciple our children.**

- You see, ordinary parents are Sunday morning Christians.
- Their faith is just one spoke on the wheel of their lives
  - with their jobs
  - and their friends
  - and their softball league
  - and their ski pass
  - and their politics...
- and Jesus is just one spoke among many,
- and therefore, it carries the same weight
  - as all the other spokes.

**But biblical parents know that their relationship with Jesus isn't a spoke on a wheel...it's the hub around which everything else turns.**

## ILLUSTRATION

But listen, I've met so many young adults whose story is,

- *“Yeah, I went off to college, and my faith was challenged...*
- *But then I remembered my mom.*
  - *My mom was up early every day reading the bible...*
  - *My dad would leave Bible verses on sticky notes on my bathroom mirror...*
  - *My mom would put a note in my lunch box with an encouraging scripture on it.”*

*“And that’s what I remember...*

*and that’s why I sustained...*

*and that’s why I’m in church today.”*

## HARPER

I mean, this is what I want for my daughter.

- I want her to remember that every morning
- she woke up to find me in my chair,
  - praying...
  - in God’s Word.
- I want her to remember that every night we prayed with her.

I want her to remember that we didn’t just talk about Christianity with our mouths, but it was the hub of our family life.

Yo, this is why The Disciplines series and the Disciplines Plans are so important not only to you, but to your children as well!

## GRADUATING FROM FAITH

And listen, I did youth ministry long enough to know the stats, and people are always asking, “Chris, how do we prevent our kids from leaving their faith when they move away from home?”

- And truthfully, you can’t prevent them from that.
- BUT the BEST way to ensure your kids are disciples,
  - is if you are a disciple.
- The best thing you can do for your child’s faith,
  - is to deepen in your own faith.

Biblical parents prioritize their own discipleship.

## #3 CONSISTENT

Number three: **SLIDE BIBLICAL PARENTS ARE CONSISTENT.**

I see this in verse 28,

- but the integrity shown by Hannah and Elkanah
- to actually fulfil the Nazarite vow.
- To **lend Samuel to the Lord as long as he lives.**

Their actions and lives are consistent with what they say they believe.

Think how tempting it would have been to just keep Samuel back as their own son.

- No one except them and God knew about the Vow.
- We get no indication that Eli the priest knew about it.

Consistency is a constant struggle.

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## ILLUSTRATION: HARPER

One day I was watching TV,

- and Harper was just buzzing all around,
- and being loud,
- and getting in the way...
- you know, being a kid.

And she was throwing a ball or something around,

- and it got away from her
- and landed on our TV stand
- where there are a bunch of pictures in frames,
- and they all collapsed,
- and stuff is falling and breaking.

And I responded,

- ***“Hey!!!***
- *That’s it!*
- *What are you doing?*
- *That’s enough!*
- *Don’t throw your stuff!*
- *You’re gonna break something!”*

Just lost my cool.

- And Harper slinks away.
- And I’m fuming.

And Maryse, you know who’s just so great at being the Holy Spirit sometimes, says to me, *“Hey, I don’t think that was your best.”*

And I was like, *“What do you mean!?! She’s being crazy!”*

And she’s like, *“Um...I think you might want a retry on that one.”*

And so, I went to Harper a little while later, after realizing that Maryse was right, like always.

And I pulled her aside and said,

- *“Hey, the way I responded when you were throwing that ball.*
- *That was not right,*
- *and that was not how God would want me to act.*
- *I’m sorry.*
- *Harper will you forgive me.”*

And Harper goes,

- *“Yep...”*
- *I forgive you.”*

And then she just walks away!

- *Like it wasn’t even a big deal anymore.*

And I’m thinking,

- *“Hey! This is supposed to be one of those moments...”*
- *that I’m gonna share in a sermon!*
- *Doesn’t asking forgiveness mean anything to you!?!*
- *Man, what a waste!”*

But as she’s walking away, she turns halfway down the hall and says,

- *“Daddy...would you forgive me for throwing the ball?”*
- And I said, *“Of course, bug.”*
- And then she just went back to playing.

## TRANSITION

Listen, consistency matters. **Our kids are going to listen to what we say, but they're going to do what we do.** And biblical parents are consistent.

## #4 CHURCH

Number four: **SLIDE BIBLICAL PARENTS PRIORITIZE CHURCH.**

Some of you aren't going to like me for this one...

- But Elkanah and Hannah went up year after year after year...
- they were faithful to practice their faith.
- And this one is tied to prioritizing our own discipleship,
- But the church is here to come alongside you
  - in YOUR discipleship
  - AND in your kid's discipleship.

## **BLANK SLIDE**

Again, when I was a youth pastor parents would come to me wondering:

- Why aren't my kids interested in their faith?
- Why don't they want to go to church?
- Why they went to college and never went back to church again?

And more often than not...

- not always...
- but very often...

I would know that family,

- and their church involvement was minimal.



- Once a month.
- Once every couple of months.
- Never belonging.
- Never serving.
- Never taking it all too seriously.

And hear me, **if you don't take it seriously, why do you think your kids will?**

Man, this is why we invest so much in kid's and youth ministry.

Whisper and Kyle and their great teams of volunteers are here to partner with you to disciple your kids.

Again, church cannot be an afterthought. It must be a priority.

## #5 PRAYER

Finally, number five: **SLIDE BIBLICAL PATENTS PRIORITIZE**

### PRAYER.

- Remember last week and Hannah's prayer?
- Today's text, verses 26-27, she reminds Eli that this child was an answer to prayer.
- And next week we'll take a deep dive into Hannah's prayer life.

Listen, **prayer is the real work of parenting.**

- **Biblical parents prioritize prayer,**
  - **because biblical parents know**
  - **that it is only by God's grace**
  - **that our kids would love and follow Christ.**

Listen, you can't control this outcome.

**BLANK SLIDE**

## APPLICATION

I know parents who were incredible!

- They weren't perfect,
  - but for all intents and purposes they did it right.
- They parented biblically.
- And yet, they have a prodigal who has not yet returned.

And then I've talked young people

- who have grown up in the most insane and messy situations,
- and God in his grace,
- made their path straight to him.

This is why we must prioritize prayer. It's the real work.

It's the thing that we can all do in parenting.

- There are a lot of people
- sitting here today
- because of the faithful prayers of
  - Mommas and Daddies.
  - Grandpas and Grandmas.
  - Sunday School teachers and youth leaders.

## CONCLUSION

And this is also why this is a parenting message AND it is more than that. Yes, this is for parenting, but it's also for us all as we disciple the next generation.

- Disciple makers are intentional.
- Disciple makers prioritize their own discipleship.
- Disciple makers are consistent.
- Disciple makers prioritize church community.
- And Disciple makers prioritize prayer.

Church, this is what we are called to! This is our very mission statement at Fathom: to glorify God by making disciples!

So, here's what I want to end with:

- you are going to fail at this!
- That feel good?

But listen to me: you are going to fail at this. It'll probs happen this week!

**You see, parenting exposes our need for a savior like nothing else in this world will.**

- These are ideals.
- These are principles.
- But you are going to fail at this.
- There are no perfect parents...

**But, may you press into the mercy and grace of God for you as you fail at this.**

- Because you have a Heavenly Father who IS perfect..
- and he's crazy about you.
  - And all that you feel for your children...
  - All that you feel for those who you want to see
    - become disciples of Jesus...
- That's just a fraction of how he feels about you.

**SLIDE 1 JOHN 4:19**

**[19] We love because he first loved us.**

So how do we parent biblically?

How do we disciple biblically?

- By knowing God's love for us,
- and loving out of that.

May the Lord help us in this endeavor.

Let's pray. **LYRICS SLIDE W/PADS**

## RESPONSES:

Well, every week at Fathom we respond in 4 ways:

- COMMUNION – THE LORD’S SUPPER
- GIVING TITHES & OFFERINGS – [fathomchurch.org/give](http://fathomchurch.org/give)
- PRAYER - [fathomchurch.org/prayer](http://fathomchurch.org/prayer)
- SINGING

So, I’m going to read the Words of Institution from the Apostle Paul, we’ll take communion, and then we’ll sing:

### 1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–26 – WORDS OF INSTITUTION

[23] For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, [24] and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[25] In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[26] For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

Love you church, let’s stand and sing together.

## RESOURCES USED:

- Chandler, Matt. *Parenting – An Awareness of Our Need*.
- Davis, Dale Ralph. 1 Samuel: Looking on the Heart.
- Flynt, Adam. *One More Generation*.
- Keller, Tim. *Hannah's Prayer*.
- Martin, Joby. *Parenting*.
- Tsumura, David Toshio. The First Book of Samuel.