

STUDY GUIDE

A PAUL TRIPP

PARENTING CONFERENCE

FOUNDATIONS OF A GODLY HOME



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Every family home is built on a foundation. Some foundations are built on rock and can stand, while other foundations are built on sand and crumble. In this brand-new parenting seminar, pastor and best-selling author Dr. Paul David Tripp will outline the required tools needed to build your home on solid ground. He will help your family implement the beliefs, values, words, and actions that are foundational to a Godly home.

SESSION 1: MERCY

Session Summary:

One of the biggest errors Christian parents can make is allowing themselves to forget. If you allow yourself to forget the daily mercies you desperately need and generously receive from your Father's hands, it will become easier for you not to parent your children with mercy.

Notes:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.

Discuss And Reflect:

1. Allow yourself to reflect on how much you needed mercy as a child. Consider all of the weakness, selfishness, and foolishness that defined your youth. How should this allow mercy to grow in your heart as a parent?

2. Allow yourself to reflect on how much you need mercy today still, as an adult. Consider all of the weakness, selfishness, and foolishness that defined your past year. How can this allow mercy to grow in your heart as a parent?

3. Parenting with mercy requires you to not take your children’s sin as a personal attack against you. How have you personalized their struggles recently, and how did that negatively impact your response to them?

4. Consider the damage that can be done when you respond to your children in irritation, anger, and with a barrage of harsh words. Alternatively, consider the beauty that can result when you respond with discipline that is kind and correction that is gentle. How have you seen these two in your parenting? Reflect on real-life examples to point you towards gentleness and away from the anger.

5. Mercy doesn't mean that you abandon discipline or always say yes and never say no. How can you continue to stand firm and hold God's law in front of your children, yet do so in a way that communicates God's love and mercy? Think of specific scenarios.

Key Verse:

"Blessed be the Lord! For he has heard the voice of my pleas for mercy." (Psalm 28:6)

SESSION 2: LOST

Session Summary:

This concept has the ability to change the way you think about what God has called you to as a parent: you're not just dealing with your child's wrong behaviors but their condition. All of the resistance that you face is the fruit of something deeper. If you don't understand that deeper thing, you will settle for surface victories and surface solutions that don't really lead to lasting change.

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Discuss And Reflect:

1. As a parent, you should celebrate good behavior, but you must not be satisfied with temporary moments of compliance. That being said, share and be thankful for any recent moments of obedience, respect, and meaningful conversations you had with your child.

2. Consider the previous question. How long did it take, after those moments of good behavior, for your children to reveal their lost condition again? Did you find yourself frustrated, confused, and discouraged? How does understanding their condition help you in these moments?

3. Consider the word pictures used throughout the Bible of sheep and shepherds. How can each of these elements below keep you motivated and realistic in your parenting?

SHEEP NEED A SHEPHERD. Sheep need shepherding because they're sheep, and children need parenting because they're children. Are there ways in which you expect your children to miraculously no longer need supervision, and how is that impacting your parenting?

SHEEP ARE PRONE TO WANDER. It's in the nature of a sheep to be easily distracted and quickly seduced by things outside of the fold; the same is true with children. How have you seen your children wander recently, and how have you responded as their shepherd?

SHEEP ARE INCAPABLE OF RESCUING THEMSELVES. Sheep cannot find their way back after they've been lost; they need someone who will search for them, find them, and bring them back home. Do you find yourself continually frustrated when God sends you on a mission to bring back your lost children? How can you see this as an opportunity and a calling more so than a hassle?

Key Verse:

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." (Luke 19:10)

SESSION 3: FOOLISHNESS

Session Summary:

If you don't understand what the Bible says about foolishness, you won't fully understand what God has called you to as a parent. Psalm 53:1 - "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.'" This means that all of your children's foolishness comes from their heart, so every moment of discipline and correction must be accompanied with heart-focused instruction.

Notes:

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Discuss And Reflect:

1. Since behavior reveals the condition of the heart, every moment of misbehavior gives you a picture of what controls the heart of your child. Think of a recent moment of misbehavior - what was God trying to show you about their heart?

2. Often times, we settle for behavioral correction instead of heart instruction. Have you used any of these in your parenting recently?

- THREAT:** "If you do that one more time, you'll be sorry you did!" You don't reveal the heart issue, because you're making the consequence for their desired behavior not worth acting on in the moment.
- MANIPULATION:** "If you're nice to your siblings, I'll buy you something special." You don't reveal the heart issue, because you're giving them what they want in exchange for temporary false behavior.
- GUILT:** "You are such an embarrassment to the family when you do that!" You don't reveal the heart issue, because you're guiltig or shaming them into postponing their desired behavior for the moment.

3. Instead of employing threat, manipulation, and guilt, how can you ask questions, tell stories, or give illustrations to impart wisdom to your children? How does this allow them to see their foolishness and the wrong heart desires behind the behavior?

Key Verse:

"Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life." (Proverbs 4:23)

SESSION 4: PROCESS

Session Summary:

You must be committed to the long-term goal of parenting because change is a process and not an event. Even the world's best teacher – Jesus – had a process mentality and, because he did, he was willing to leave his work to unfinished people.

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Discuss And Reflect:

1. Share some of the frustrations and discouragement that you currently have as a parent as the result of you having to repeat yourself again and again.

2. Are you showing evidence, through your words and actions, that you believe successful parenting can be accomplished in a singular event rather than a process?

3. How can you substitute emotionally reactive parenting with project mentality parenting? What has God revealed to you about each specific child that needs to be prioritized, and how can you address it in their lives this week?

4. How has your own life been a testimony of God's process of change? In what ways is God still working on you, through a process instead of a singular event?

5. What can you do to remain encouraged in the midst of the long, sometimes discouraging, parenting process? What resources of help can you reach out to?

Key Verse:

"But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life." (1 Timothy 1:16)