

**"Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth." Psalm 127:4**

## **Session 2: You're in Charge**

### **1. Understanding authority is equally as foundational as the importance of the heart**

- A. Our culture sees derived authority produced in one of two ways:
  - i. Overwhelming force
  - ii. Consent
- B. The idea of intelligent people willingly submitting to the authority of others is increasingly foreign in our culture
  - i. Young people view authority as someone over them telling them what to do
  - ii. Many young people want to avoid being in authority—they consider it unfair
- C. So, many parents give away their authority over their children
  - i. Parents end up begging, cajoling etc.
  - ii. The idea of biblical authority is lost

### **2. The Biblical view is that God has made parents to be authorities**

- A. Succumbing to unbiblical pressures, we reduce obedience to a matter of personal convenience
  - i. This undermines biblical authority
  - ii. Authority then becomes about me rather than about God

### **3. God calls you to be an authority in the lives of your children**

- A. Gracious authority is a blessing to your children
- B. Children need parental authority because they lack maturity, wisdom and life experience
- C. God has given parents this role to be his agent, his ambassador in the lives of their kids
- D. Genesis 18:19 — you have a mandate from God; you are on God's errand
- E. You are God's agent for discipline, correction and nurture in the life of your child

### **4. Implications for your children**

- A. It is a blessing for them to be under authority
- B. God gives authority to parents, to be in charge of children
- C. Thus, it is appropriate for parents to give direction

### **5. The message for your children**

- A. There is a God in heaven
  - i. He is kind
  - ii. He has made you and me and all things for his glory
  - iii. God in his kindness has put you in a family for your good
  - iv. It is a blessing for you to obey mommy and daddy

- v. We insist on your obedience because we know that is what is good for you
- B. Obeying Mom and Dad is good for you
- C. Mom and Dad are under authority too
  - i. The authority of God is mediated through parents
  - ii. Note the story of Tedd's two-year-old grandson

#### **6. Sinful anger confuses children and muddies the waters in family life**

- A. Your anger frames discipline incorrectly
  - i. It makes the problem between you and the child, rather than a problem between the child and God
  - ii. When children are not submitting to their parents, they are not submitting to God
- B. If you are thinking rightly about the nature of your authority as a parent, it will keep you from the huge temptation to personalize your child's disobedience
  - i. This makes the disobedience about you the parent
  - ii. Your child's responsibility to obey you is ultimately about obeying God
- C. You require obedience because it is God's plan

#### **7. God's call to be an authority provides**

- A. Confidence to provide direction
- B. A mandate to act
- C. Parents who are called to shepherd their children on God's behalf
  - i. In contrast to parents who want to be advisors or to make suggestions
  - ii. Don't give children the idea that they are independent decision makers and that the role of the parent is simply to suggest alternatives—this is not a healthy message to give to a three-year-old

#### **8. When you give away your authority**

- A. You give your children an appetite for authority that does not exist
- B. They acquire a mistaken notion of freedom
- C. Nowhere in God's plan for you is the notion that you are an independent person with no authorities over you

#### **9. How the Bible defines freedom**

- A. Psalm 119:44-45: "I will continually obey your law forever and ever and I will walk about in freedom for I have sought out your precepts."
- B. Our culture equates parenting with being a care provider, not an authority.
- C. The Bible says you are the authority in your children's lives to nurture and develop them
- D. God has called you to be the shepherd of your child

#### **10. Understanding God's calling necessitates:**

- A. Clear objectives: What are short and long term goals for each of your children?
- B. Humility in your task
  - i. You function as God's agent.
  - ii. Your children are not yours to do with as you please
- C. There is no place for anger in the nurture of children
  - i. See James 1:19-20
  - ii. Unholy, human anger has no place in discipline

#### **11. Living under authority is designed to be a blessing for children**

- A. Discipline is *corrective*, not *punitive*
  - i. You are bringing the corrections and reproofs of life
- B. Discipline is designed to restore
  - i. The goal is to restore my child to a right relationship with God
- C. Discipline is an expression of love. Proverbs 13:24; Hebrews 12:5; Revelation 3:19
- D. Understanding authority biblically is foundational for doing your job as a parent

**Take Home Principle #2: Our children are a gift from God and He has given us the authority to shepherd them for His glory.**

**Homework:** Read Chapter 4 in the book "Shepherding a Child's Heart." Schedule a date night to discuss these questions:

1. Do you think you struggle more with being an authority with your child or is your struggle to be a *kind, gracious* authority with your child? Does your spouse agree with your assessment? Be encouraging as you consider ways to help each other model authority for your children.
2. In what other ways do you struggle to be an authority? Do you feel you have given away your authority? Are you tempted to discipline in anger? Do you only discipline when convenient? Do you see yourself as God's agent in discipline?
3. Talk about how you can explain the Principle of Authority to your children.