

Christian Urban Legends
“A Godly Home Guarantees Godly Kids, part 2”

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A godly home does not guarantee godly kids...but a godly home can lay the foundation for the grace of God and the Gospel of Christ that *alone* can produce godly kids.

Three G's of Godly Parenting –

I. Stop Looking for Some Kind of Parenting Guarantee

Proverbs 22:6 “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.”

What it actually says in the original language (Hebrew) is “Train up a child *in his way* [i.e. the way he is bent (as a sinner)] and when he is old he will not depart from it.” In other words, this verse is a warning for parents more than it is a promise.

II. Keep Living and Speaking the Gospel as Much as Possible

Look for ways to communicate the Gospel with your lips and with your life...not a “system” but the Gospel.

“We had placed great confidence in Christian nurture in the home and in Christian private schools. But no one grows into grace through a Christianized environment. No one gets to God by moral self-improvement. You only get to God by being transplanted from your natural soil into the life of Christ by a personal faith in Him. In our nurture of Barbara we had unconsciously forgotten these foundational truths. We were also beginning to learn that we were entirely dependent on God to change Barbara...”

~ C. John Miller & Barbara Miller Julian, *Come Back, Barbara*, pg. 30-31

Romans 1:16-17 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith...”

“... a parenting principle that we need to come to grips with. God says, ‘His grace is made perfect’ Where? In our weakness! (That’s what 2 Cor. 12:10 teaches) Here’s a principle: In parenting, your weakness will not keep you from effectiveness if you believe the Gospel. Your delusion of strength will! Because it will keep you from seeking the Lord...keep you from seeking His help...”

~ Taken from *Case for Kids* tapes series, tape #3 “What Are Teenagers?”

I Thessalonians 1:5-7 “For our Gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. And you became followers of us, and of the Lord...so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia...”

III. Keep Praying for God’s Grace and Mercy to Explode in Their Lives & Yours

Eugene Peterson - “It’s a long obedience in the same direction.”

“Our reliance on everything but grace has us exhausted, worried, and secretly counting the days until our little cherubs are out of their diapers, or in school, or out of adolescence, or out of the house. The desire to rush through one stage to get to the next is the idiocy of believing that the grass really is greener on the other side. It isn't, of course. Don't rush the future; generally parenting only gets harder.”

~ Dan Allender, *How Children Raise Parents*, p. 131

When that parenting conflict comes to a head with an older child that we need to remember what Titus 3 says about both of us...parent and child.

Titus 3:2-7 “to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men. ³ For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. ⁴ But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, ⁵ not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit ⁶ whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

“We continue to try to take over, to run our own race, to be our own boss. Sin is not just doing bad things like dishonoring parents, lying, cheating, stealing, or committing adultery. It is also saying to God, ‘No, you cannot rule over me. I will rule over myself and my family, and I will depend upon myself and not upon you to train my children. You can assist me from time to time when things are desperate, but I will not permit you to take full control.’...

You may even have to admit that as a parent you are often obsessed with your own anxieties, pains, and failings. Driven by frustration, you may go from book to book, from counselor to counselor, trying to find the how-tos that will turn you into a successful father or mother. But the difficulty does not lie with the counselors or the books on family life and child training; it rests with you.

What is the real problem? It may be that you simply do not know as much as you should about God’s grace. Maybe you know nothing at all about it.”

~ C. John Miller & Barbara Miller Julian, *Come Back, Barbara*, pg. 162-163

2 Peter 3:18 “But grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.”

“So my counsel for hurting parents is to learn to wait on God in prayer. Mobilize others to pray for you and your rebellious child. But give your prayers God’s focus. Study Luke 11:1-13 about the promise of the Spirit, and soak yourself in the parable of the father’s love in Luke 15:11-32. It will help you learn your need to endure, to wait, to keep your mouth shut, and to forgive and love. Persevere in it all. You will leave your bitterness and anger behind as you set forth on the grandest adventure of your life.”

~ C. John Miller & Barbara Miller Julian, *Come Back, Barbara*, pg. 51

Ephesians 2:8-9 “For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

IV. Get Out of the Way and Let God Do What Only He Can Do

Isaiah 40:26-31 “Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these things, who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, by the greatness of His might and the strength of His power; not one is missing. ²⁷ Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel: ‘My way is hidden from the LORD, and my just claim is passed over by my God?’ ²⁸ Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. ²⁹ He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. ³⁰ Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, ³¹ But those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.”

“Waiting in a godly way, without frustration but in prayerful dependence on God, is not easy, believe me. Waiting for God to intervene is a kind of death, a special humiliation to activist Americans like us. We always want to be doing something, finding some new how-to as a means for providing instant release from our struggles. But I was slowly getting the idea that God wanted us to meet Him, and let Him meet Barbara in his own way and in His own time. We knew that John [the young man she was living with] had not entrapped Barbara and that the real chain by which the devil held her was her own mental outlook. Like many young people, she was convinced, with an almost religious intensity, that the most important thing in life is seeking fulfillment and that the worst thing is to be unhappy...”

~ C. John Miller & Barbara Miller Julian, *Come Back, Barbara*, pg. 87

Psalm 27:13-14 “I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Wait on the LORD; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the LORD!”

“I hated to watch her fall into a chaos of her own making. Furthermore, I did not like feeling that I was also part of the process of tearing and breaking. I wanted to cry out, ‘Call off the bulldozer, Lord; I like my landscape just the way it is! I’ve had my share of suffering.’ At that point Rose Marie told me that Jill, our daughter-in-law, and Ruth, our daughter, wanted to talk to me. When I met with Jill, she had some real wisdom to share.

‘Ruth and I know how much you and Mom care about Barb,’ she said. ‘But we think that the best thing you can do for Barb is to let her go - all the way. Right now she feels the intensity of your caring, but as long as she feels it from you she will not be able to see Christ. You’re just too big on the horizon for her to see Jesus.’

Later, Ruth said much the same thing. She asked, ‘Dad, is there anything you need to tell Barbara that you haven’t already told her?’ I thought that one over carefully. No, I answered, I guess maybe I’ve said it all at least once and then some. ‘Then,’ said Ruth, ‘ease off. I really believe as you and Mom step back and let her go, you’ll give room for the Holy Spirit to work. So long as she feels your emotional pressure, the Holy Spirit can’t show her Christ. Now she only feels the presence of you and Mom and all your caring. At this time you have done all you can.’

It was a revolutionary idea. It was the kind of wisdom that could only, ultimately, have come from the Lord. I had been taking Barbara so seriously, and unconsciously making her feel my concern, that I was not giving her the opportunity to be driven to Christ by her own mistakes. I was trying to be the Holy Spirit in Barbara’s life, and in doing so I only succeeded in making her more aware of me than of God.”

~ C. John Miller & Barbara Miller Julian, *Come Back, Barbara*, pg. 68-69