



Surviving Parenting

Adapted from “Family Survivor” series by Rod Loy

While at a hospital, and I passed by a big plaque that said at the top “Wall Of Fame”, with places for a bunch of names. Guess how many names were on the wall? Zero. No one made the wall of fame. Why would you put that on the wall with no names? What would possibly lead you to announce that no one made your wall of fame? That is sometimes how I feel about parenting. The parenting wall of fame has no names. My name certainly is not on it. Maybe someday!

It happens often. I will be talking with a student who is unhappy with his or her parents. I listen to them talk about life being unfair and parents being unreasonable. Then they say, “I wish you were my dad.” I start laughing and say, “You would enjoy that for about three days. You really do not want to be my kid. Three days with me and your parents would seem like the most reasonable people in the world. You would not like my rules at all.”

It is human nature, or at least kid nature. When we look at our parents, we see the rules, not the freedom and privileges. When we look at someone else’s parents, we see the freedom and privileges and not the rules. Parents do the same thing. We watch someone else’s kids when they are at our house and think, “Why can’t my kids be polite and well-behaved like their children?” Those same kids you think are polite and well-behaved are just as bad as yours when they are at their home instead of yours. And, when your kids are at their home, your children are wonderful. Other people’s children are always better. You do not have to discipline them or correct them. When they quit being fun, you just return them to the original owner.

I knew a lot more about parenting before I became one. Before I had three children, I could teach the most amazing principles about parenting. After having kids of my own, I realized exactly how stupid I really was. When I first became a parent my strategy was I would pray hard, work hard, and hope often.

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However, as I look back on my parenting journey, I can see some things I did well and some things I wish I had done better. When my oldest turned nineteen I would say, “I would be a much better parent now than I was nineteen years ago.” Why? Because, I have had nineteen years of practice. It is too bad I did not have all this practice before I had my kids. I feel sorry for my kids. I learned on them and made a ton of mistakes. To survive parenting is a great goal. However, more than surviving the parenting journey, you can enjoy the journey.

COURAGE

C1: Describe your parents when you were in grade school, middle school, high school, and college.

C2: As you look back at your parenting journey, what are some things you did well? What are some things you wish you would have done better?

C3: Read the following and answer the questions.

Proverbs 22:6 (ESV) Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

- How do you train a child? What elements are needed to train a child properly?

- How do you train your child when they are:
 - Four

 - Eight

 - Fifteen

 - Twenty-one

STRENGTH

S1: When it comes to parenting your child, what formula do you use? Was your formula different for each child you have? How?

S2: What was your emotion when you first saw your child? Can you remember someone telling you how horrible the next steps were going to be? What were your thoughts?

Proverbs 12:25 (ESV)

- How can this verse help you when pessimists try to speak into your life?

S3: If you want to climb Mt. Everest, you would not just show up at the base of the mountain and start climbing. Read and answer the following.

Ecclesiastes 4:9–10 (ESV)

- From these verses, what do you glean about being a parent?

- Who do you go to for parenting advice?

ENDURANCE

E1: Parenting can be a hilarious journey. Please read and answer the following.

Proverbs 17:22 (ESV)

- From this verse, what do you need to be a healthy parent?

- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very full and 4 being not very full, rate how full your house is with laughter. Write out a plan to improve.

E2: Read and answer the following.

Luke 10:41–42 (ESV)

Proverbs 3:5–6 (ESV)

- From these verses, what do you glean about where the focus of your parenting should be?

- Do you focus more on how your children measure up or do you focus more on developing your children to be lifelong followers of Christ? How can you mold your children into being lifelong followers of Christ?

E3: Read and answer the following.

Romans 12:10 (ESV)

- From this verse, what should you teach your children?

- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well, rate yourself on how well you put other people first. What is your plan to put other people first?