



INTRO AUDIO:

Hey friends. Have you ever had a circumstance where you were being led by someone who obviously didn't get how to do what it was you were all trying to accomplish? That can be a super frustrating situation to be in. And I wonder how often have we, as Christian parents put our kids in that exact position, this is God fearing kids and the parents who raise them welcome back to God, fearing kids and the parents who raised them. I'm Carey Green

MINDI:

And I'm Mindi.

CAREY:

And we are here to talk to you today about where godly parenting begins. How would you answer that question? If someone were to ask you, where does godly parenting begin? What do you think people might say

MINDI:

In the church in Sunday school?

CAREY:

Yeah. Or in knowledge of the Bible or some class, some parenting class that you go to. And there's some good ones out there, but a book. Yeah, all of that. But we're here to tell you that in our experience and in our teaching of others throughout the years, who have had issues with their kids and things like that, we've discovered that godly parenting really begins with you. The parent, you have got to be first off seeking the Lord yourself before you can expect that your kids are going to have any kind of desire. Cuz I can tell you right now, kids at any age can smell a hypocrite. They can understand both from your actions and your words and the lack of consistency thereof that you're saying, one thing, follow God, do this, do this, but in your own life, you're not doing so. And, and they'll know, they just know.

CAREY:

And so our goal here is not to avoid our kids labeling as hypocrites. Our goal is to be genuine followers of Christ ourselves. And so let's start off with Proverbs 22 6, it says, train up a child in the way he should go. Even when he is old, he will not depart from it. This is a promise that we take from the scriptures with great comfort. Okay. I'm going to train up my children in the way of the Lord and he's not going to depart from it when he gets older. Amen. That's a promise that we should take. But I think too often we focus on the training up the child part, but we don't focus on the fact that if we are going to lead them in the way they should go, we first need to know the way they should go. Not just intellectually, but experientially. We as parents need to take them down a path we have already walked.

MINDI:

It's kind of like in a sports team, you want the coach who has won at the game to be the one who's training the players. And we, as parents need to be ahead down the road, having one at the game of life, to be able to, to know how to train our children, how to live the life of a Christian successfully, because we want them to win just like the Lord has helped us to already win.

CAREY:

Yeah, that's a great point. And I don't think we mean to imply that you need to be living a life that's free of trouble and free of issues and free of your own challenges and growth because that's what life is. But we do want to know that we, as parents are tackling all of those things with the strength and the wisdom of the Lord that He provides to us, because really it's the hardships that make us grow. And part of our goal in training our child in the way they should go means that when they hit a snag, when they hit a hardship, they know how to handle it spiritually speaking, because we've trained them in that we've exemplified it for them. We have walked them through that path in the small child size things as they're growing up and in the larger, bigger things as life hits them with other things

MINDI:

We wanted to read to Proverbs three, five, and six trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding in all your ways, acknowledge Him and He will make straight your paths.

CAREY:

So you notice some of the boxes there that Solomon is giving us to check first off trust in the Lord with all your heart. So put your kids to the side for a moment in your mind and think about yourself. Have you learned to trust in the Lord with all your heart? Have you learned that He calls the shots you don't, you need to rest in the truth, the belief that He is working for your good and He's doing so with wisdom and with divine power and with majesty and honor and all those things that God is so good at doing because it's who He is. Have you reached a point that you are trusting in the Lord with all your heart? None of us have perfectly, but that's our goal. That's our ambition. And we want to be consistent in that both for the sake of our own spiritual growth. And also for the sake of our kids who are watching, we want them to see what a genuine passionate pursuit of Jesus looks like.

MINDI:

For example, the second verse says in all your ways, acknowledge Him and He will make your path straight. Are you as a husband and wife finding how to work through your arguments as a married couple, are you acknowledging God in those arguments? And is He making your path straight? Are you coming to a godly conclusion and being unified as a couple and loving one another? Or are you just leaving those tensions left undone, left unresolved? How are you going to be able to help your children when they get older and they start fighting with their brothers and sisters, how are you going to help them to know how to work out those little arguments? If you and your husband, haven't already learned how to do that.

CAREY:

Yeah. Or if you're only recourse to an argument is to get louder and stronger and more belligerent and just bully your way to be the way that things go. We don't want our kids being bullies. Why do we want to be a bully in our relationships? We really have to think this thing through, from a biblical standpoint, right?

MINDI:

And for example, you have a daughter let's say she starts getting at that emotional stage in grade school, teen years. And you can tell she's just being controlled, left and right by her emotions. And it feels terrible about herself, thinks she's ugly and fat. And um, nobody likes her. How are you as a mom going to help her wade through those emotions to believe what's true about herself. If you haven't learned yourself, what is true about yourself?

CAREY:

Yeah, this goes really deep. This is like to the bone sort of deep, where we have to examine our own hearts. We have to examine our own walk through the Lord and do what's needed to get on the right track. I love the promise though, of Proverbs three, five and six. When we trust the Lord with all our heart and we refuse to lean on our own understanding, which could mean not just our understanding, but worldly understanding that we're gaining and adopting as our own many. I know you have some examples of that.

MINDI:

Like for example, seeking wisdom about parenting through parenting magazine or other books, or maybe parenting conferences that are not from Christians, not biblically based that I think is not a wise way to gain inside and how to parent. There's no reason why we need to go outside of God's word to find how to train our children. God will help us in every area.

CAREY:

Yeah. And let's think about it from a real nuanced perspective when proverb says lean, not on your own understanding. Well, some of our understanding the way we've been taught by our culture is that the experts know what they're talking about. The experts who write in parenting magazine, the experts who do the conferences, the experts who do the podcasts and here we are doing a podcast, you know, but we're trying to draw our material from the word of God

MINDI:

School counselor, the therapist.

CAREY:

Yeah, the school counselor, the therapist, great additions there. Now are these people helpful at some stages? Yes, they may be helpful. But what I think Solomon is trying to drive home here is we need to abandon all worldly and human standards of wisdom and understanding and in all our ways acknowledge God. And what does that mean? It means to seek Him, seek his wisdom, seek what He would have us to do. So it's acknowledging that He has an opinion about this circumstance. He has a biblical pattern for how to handle it. And that's what we wanted to discover. That's what we want to find.

MINDI:

Yes. It's as practical as saying, Lord, my three year old is moody. Every time she wakes up from her nap, what do we do with this? How do we help her not to be moody. Please give us your wisdom. It's as practical as that, God cares about every little detail like that.

CAREY:

Absolutely. And that scenario may sound like one that you initially might think, oh well, that's just something we'd get through. I wouldn't even address that because she's three years old, but there's wisdom in helping your child at every stage of their life, from birth all the way through to learn how to handle everything that makes up life. That's their emotion, that's their circumstance, their reaction to things, their thinking and, and processing of things. That's our job as parents is to lead them in the way they should go. And we've been there. God has let us, we've gotta lead our kids through that as well.

MINDI:

Another way to rephrase that is train your child in the way he should think. All of life comes from how we think, whether it's thinking truthfully or not. And so from the early, early stage of life with our children, we are teaching them how to think.

CAREY:

I love that because as you know, Mindi, my other podcast, I'm always saying it's time to get our mind aligned with the truth of God. We've gotta do that with our kids. We've gotta teach our kids how to do that from early on. I mean, think about your life as an adult. If you have been taught from three years old, four years old, five years old, progressively, how to align your mind with God's truth every single day, when you woke up, how would your life be different right now? How would the way you handle problems and circumstances and situations be right now? Well, if you're a parent of young children, you have a wonderful opportunity to set your kids up for a godly life. Like you can only imagine.

MINDI:

That's exciting.

CAREY:

That's very exciting. Now we have another passage here, Hebrews five, 12 through 14 that we're going to look at, and this is kind of a stinging rebuke. It's this biblical writer coming at us with an assessment of where we might be in life and a correction. So many. Why don't you read that for us?

MINDI:

Hebrews five, 12 through 14 for though, by this time you ought to be teachers. You need someone to teach you again, the basic principles of the Oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness since he is a child, but solid food is for the mature. For those who have their powers of discernment, trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

CAREY:

So we have two people here that the writer's contrasting. We have the person who has not trained themselves in the way of righteousness. They have not pursued spiritual maturity. And we have the person who has, and the writer is saying to these readers, you are in that first category. You have not trained yourself very well. You're still drinking milk. When you should be eating meat, you're still, you know, going to elementary school when you're high school age. I mean, we can make all kinds of illustrations for it. But sadly, I think this is what many parents run into when their kids start hitting junior high age and senior high age. And it suddenly gets harder because you have it more of a, a grown up

person you're dealing with as a child who can reason and think and respond like you can. And you're finding yourself, trying to play catch up because you have not done the diligent work of staying up on your spiritual growth as you should have.

MINDI:

I think it's good for parents to think of themselves as teachers, whether that's something that comes naturally for them or not. Sometimes a mom or dad might have gone to school to become a teacher. So it comes naturally for them, or they might have the gift of teaching. So that comes naturally for them. But whether it comes naturally or not, you are the teacher of your child and that needs to be your goal to be the best teacher for them, the best discipler. You need to be already knowing how to eat meat so that you can train your child, how to eat meat. Cuz when they come out of the womb, they're only going to be having milk for a while.

CAREY:

And let's think about this in the most practical terms we can, if you are not building habits into your own life of regular times of prayer, regular times of studying God's words so that you can gain his wisdom for life, regular times of fellowship with other believers so that you can be encouraged and built up and supported. That's where you start. You've got to do the work yourself for yourself. And let me just throw in a little word of admonition to husbands. If you're the man in the home, it's your responsibility to see to it that your family is headed in that direction. You first, your wife with you and that you're growing in your faith. That's your responsibility as the head of the home. So make sure you're taking that seriously.

MINDI:

And also mom and dad. What is the one of the first things you want to teach your child about God, you want to teach them how God loves them for God's to love the world that He gave his own begotten son. Then you'll sing to your children. Jesus loves me this. I know, but if you don't know how much God loves you, then how are you going to teach your child? And that will only come from your personal time with Him in studying the Bible by yourself. And so I think practically a good way to think about it is many times parents will say, no, we're not ready to have children yet because we need to save up a certain amount of money or our income is not where it needs to be. I would say don't worry about that. God will provide when He wants you to have children, He'll provide for you financially. But what I would say, what you be concerned about is are you having a consistent time with the Lord almost every day of the week, are you drawing closer to the Lord every day and getting to know his word every day, that's more important than having more money in the bank

CAREY:

Because godly parenting begins with you. That's where it begins is when you walking a path that you one day want to lean your children down. And so no matter where you are in your parenting journey right now, you have a brand new baby in the house. You're expecting you have elementary school kids. You have middle school, you have high school. It doesn't really matter where you are. You need to start developing your relationship with the Lord, to the next level, whatever that is for you. And you need to do it diligently and you need to grow in it. If you're married, build in accountability between you and your spouse, give them permission to ask you about how you're doing in your daily devotion, how you're doing. If you have not begun listening, or if you don't know about the Morning Mindset that I mentioned earlier, subscribe to the Morning Mindset, there'll be a link to it in the description for this episode, it's a five to seven minute shot to the soul to help you get your mind aligned for the day.

CAREY:

I can't tell you the number of people who email me saying the Morning Mindset, kind of set them on a new journey, spiritually speaking. And it's not that there's anything magic about it. It's just the word of God. It's God's truth. Getting into your mind every single day and it will help you Mindi, what other advice would you give to a mom or dad who's busy or stressed or just kind of overwhelmed with life? And they say, oh man, here's another thing that I've got to do that I knew I wasn't living up to. But man, this, this is really convicting. What would you say to them?

MINDI:

I was just thinking of how it could be overwhelming. You could be listening and thinking. Yes. I need to do that. I've been wanting to try to do that for a long time. I would just encourage you to just ask, just to be honest with the Lord and apologize, to Him. "I'm sorry. I haven't been putting you first. I want to put you first, but I know that Your word tells me that I cannot do anything without you doing it through me and without you giving me your strength to do it." So I guess I would give the advice that you start out by asking God to give you the strength to do what is right by spending time with Him on a regular basis in his word, praying and reading the Bible and lean on Him to give you that desire. Lean on Him to give you the motivation. Don't do it out of your own strength. Wait for Him to give it to you and trust. Trust that He will answer.

CAREY:

Absolutely. I remember a time in my own journey when even the desire to get out of bed early or have a, a regular time with the Lord was waning. And I had to pray, Lord, give me the desire. Give me the want to give me the want to, to want to sometimes is where we have to, and God is so gracious. He's so merciful that He will answer those prayers because they're perfectly aligned with his heart for us. And so don't feel like you've gone too far. You've been too lazy and He's never going to accept you. Just cast that out of your mind. That's a life in the pit of hell. Just turn your heart toward Him. And He will turn his heart toward you.