



022: Child training conversations (an example or two)

AUDIO INTRO:

When it comes to the everyday parenting situations of life where you're trying to teach your kids how to live out the faith that you're demonstrating and teaching them, how do you go about that instruction? What sort of things do you say? How do you handle their resistance? What should those conversations really be like? This is God fearing kids and the parents who raise them. Hello friends, welcome back. I am Carey and I'm here with my lovely wife

MINDI:

Mindi,

CAREY:

And we are here to talk to you today about child training conversations That may not be a phrase you're used to using, but it's basically how should you talk with your kids when you're training them? What does that look like? What kind of approach should you take? Let's start out first of all by thinking about training in general. What's the last type of training that you were involved in? Was it work related? Maybe it was a sporting thing, maybe have to do a school. Give that a moment of thought. What are trainings typically like? How do they typically go? Well, usually the person who does the training, who conducts it, the coach, the teacher, whoever that is, they have a plan that's going to cover the basics that you need building one upon the other. They're going to have a systematic way of going about it. And our contention based on the scripture is that parents seeking to train their children have to do the same thing. We've got to have a plan, we've got to approach this wisely. We've got a couple of scriptures here that we want to read real quickly. Mindi, you want to start with Proverbs 22 verse six.

MINDI:

It says, train up a child in the way he should go even when he is old. He will not depart from it.

CAREY:

All right? So you hear their real, obviously in this famous verse, train up a child in the way he should go. There's some purpose to that. There's some structure to that because it's related to how that child should move into adulthood, how they should live their life. Now it may have a connotation of how he should go or she should go specific to their personality or their bent, but even so, there's a system to that. There's a way you're going to go about it that's intentional and different based on that kid all to say, we should be planning, we should be intentional about training our children. We have another one here, Psalms 78 5, you going to read that one for us?

MINDI:

He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children.

CAREY:

Now this is really interesting. Even back in the Old Testament days, God gives his law and then he tells the parents, teach this to your kids. Make sure your kids understand how I think about things. What the world is like. From my view, what their place in that world is. There's a structure, a system to the way the teaching is to go. So Mindi, when you think of the areas in which we need to train our children, what are the things that come to mind?

MINDI:

Okay, one most important area is the spiritual area and the relationship with the Lord. So we want to plan it out in terms of how are we going to teach them about Jesus? How are we going to teach them about the gospel?

CAREY:

So it's everything from who God is and how to know him to how to live as a child in the kingdom.

MINDI:

Right? That's why I believe you could very well see your children come to the Lord at a young age because if you're planning that and you're speaking to them about Jesus and about his truth, from the time they can understand words, then at very young age they're going to want to ask Jesus into their heart in most situations.

CAREY:

Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. Well how about other areas? What's some others you think of

MINDI:

In the emotional area? That's a huge area. You can start teaching your children about how to handle their emotions early on. And it also makes me think about in this day and age where kids are struggling with their gender identity and that is based on emotion. Yeah. And so we need to teach them how to handle their emotions as a boy and as a girl. And there's just a lot of wisdom that we need from the Lord and how to do that because the Bible verse train your child on the way he or should go. Well that means if you have a boy then he should be trained as a boy. If you have a girl, she should be trained as a girl. Yeah. Your girl might end up being a tomboy and love more active things or she might end up wanting to be a princess and have tea parties all the time. Yeah. Or your boy might be more into music and he's more creative and um, not into sports with God's wisdom, he will lead you in how to train your male and your female children based on what's true about them and what God says is true

CAREY:

About them. Yeah. And just to clarify something that you said there when you said that the gender identity confusion that people feel is a feeling issue, it's an emotional issue. I would just challenge listeners, if you don't think that's true, will just listen to the people who are expressing their story in that realm. And it's always about, I felt like a man trapped in a woman's body or I felt like I was always more

feminine. It's always a feeling that's being expressed and our feelings don't dictate reality. Reality dictates

MINDI:

Reality. Right. Cause you can't argue about the private parts. The baby is born with <laugh>. Yeah. And you can't argue with the chromosomes. Yeah. In their DNA.

CAREY:

Yeah. It is what it is. All right. So other areas where we should be training our children

MINDI:

Intellectually, how they think, how they learn, how to make decisions and process through what's happened to them, how a child thinks, how a person, an adult thinks is very crucial in how they live their life.

CAREY:

Yeah. I think it's important for parents to understand we are responsible to teach our children what to believe. Many parents that we hear from time to time will say, well, I want them to have their own beliefs I want them to have. And that is, if I can say it, the most foolish thing you could ever do. Because not only are they an ill-equipped immature child and don't have the capacity to come to truth on their own without God's intervention, but they also have an enemy out there, spiritual enemies who are trying to lead them down the wrong path and will lead them down the wrong path. If you as a godly parent don't guide them,

MINDI:

It's also not a wise thing for Christian parents to have the mindset that they want their child to just grow up to think about God the way they end up thinking about them because they're born a sinner and so they're going to be drawn towards sin. So our responsibilities is to train our child how to think about truth so that one of these days they will ask Jesus into their heart, the Holy Spirit will be in their life and they will learn how to conquer that sin in their life daily.

CAREY:

Yeah. There are other areas we could train our children in as well. The physical, the social societal, I mean there's all kinds of things, but let's move on to talk about the basics of what a training dialogue between you and your kids might look like. In other words, what are the principles you need to have in mind just generally speaking for any age child as you're going through some sort of a training conversation? Mindi, what's the first thing you would think of

MINDI:

Your tone of voice, how you speak to them, speaking clearly. Um, being on the alert to clearly instruct at any given time.

CAREY:

Yeah. So it's a mindset of being prepared in teachable moments or not so teachable moments to instruct.

MINDI:

Right?

CAREY:

Yeah. And when you say that tone of voice thing, I think it's important for us to give this some thought because I was thinking about this in relation to pets. We have a black lab and we could talk to the dog in a really happy tone of voice and she would be happy, she would be responding in a cheerful way to us. But we could say with that tone of voice, bad words like, oh you're such a bad dog. And she wouldn't know the difference. All because of tone of voice <laugh>.

MINDI:

Yeah.

CAREY:

And younger children are kind of that way when they don't understand the words yet they or they understand basic words. They're hearing the tone, they're understanding this is a happy tone, that's a mean tone. That's a disappointed tone. They pick up on tones now they're going to learn the words really quickly, but at the same time they need to hear a distinction in our voices between approval and disapproval just from the tone of voice. So a dad should not say, Hey, you did that good job. Instead you say, good job, way to go. You know, that way the small child is able to get it.

MINDI:

Yeah. I think that's very important, especially when you're starting your training with your children and they're young. Your words and your tone is huge because your child is, is still learning to know the meaning of words. But when you say no and affirm voice as opposed to yay and a happy voice, they're going to start understanding what makes mommy happy and what makes mommy sad real clearly.

CAREY:

Exactly right. And let's just say you did give everything in kind of monotone tones. The child is not going to feel very connected to you emotionally because you're just kind of flat line. You're the same all the time. But when you are making an effort to express something with more enthusiasm or a more gentle or compassionate tone, that's going to build a good relationship between the two of you. Now let's talk also just generally about encouragement. That should be part of our training. What forms do you see encouragement

MINDI:

Taking? I think encouragement is huge and it needs to be upfront in the parent's mind in terms of I want to always encourage my child to do right. And then I always want to encourage my child if he's doing wrong. Hmm. So the main word in that mindset, the main thinking and goal that we have as parents is I want to encourage my child always, just like scripture talks about, we need to be able to build one another up in the Lord. You're doing that with your child if you have encouragement in the forefront of your mind. So when you're training your children in different ways, you want to be positive, you want to be hopeful, you want to say, I know you can do this.

CAREY:

You want to believe the best of them and their motives.

MINDI:

Yes. You want to catch when they do something right. And you want to tell them, I saw how you were talking nicely to your brother. I'm so proud of you. That was very loving. That was just like Jesus. That's encouragement. That's instructing them.

CAREY:

Yeah. And I would say physical touch is also a form of encouragement. I mean, when you're putting your armor on the challenge, you're giving them a hug, you're patting them on the back. I mean we even use that phrase to mean encouragement, you know, pat them on the back. Physical touch is obviously part of that equation.

MINDI:

That's also so very important when you are having to punish your child. Yeah. You want them to definitely feel your disappointment, your sadness, your hurt, or even your anger towards the wrong they did. But after the punishment is done, you want to hug on them a lot. Whether they're a teenager or a three year old. Yeah. They need to feel your physical touch. God made us to need physical touch from one another.

CAREY:

Yeah. And the, the way I've come to think about that is during that moment of discipline, you are intentionally creating an emotional distance between you and the child. That's part of the, the dynamic that builds regret in their, in their mind and sorrow over their sin. And after the punishment is finished, you want to close that gap. You want to pull it back together in physical touch helps to do that. It brings you and the child back together. Another mindset we should have when we're training our kids is one that's based around the clarity of expectations. What it is we're expecting, making it just very plain to them so they can understand it. That way when moments where you do need to discipline come up, you're able to point back to this expectation that everybody had that this was the expectation, this wasn't met, the consequence was this it, it's all been clearly talked about ahead of time.

MINDI:

Yeah. That's really good. And like we talked in another episode about having an orderly home. So I'm just imagining at the breakfast table, the mom is thinking about the day and what needs to happen. And it'd be very helpful for her to help her children to think about the day. So after breakfast, children, what do you need to do? What is expected of you? She would explain it, I would like for you to do these things before we head off to school or before we start our homeschooling or whatever the schedule of the day is. And if they're younger and you're still training and they're not really good at this, you would need to say after breakfast, if you don't get these things done quickly, this will be your punishment. And you explain that. And so the child has it in their mind clearly what they need to be doing. And you're wanting to help them to succeed. You're wanting to help them to obey you. So why not explain it out so that they can understand it very simply.

CAREY:

Yeah, exactly. And this is a thing that, especially with younger children, can be very helpful toward developing a mindset of responsibility and a good work ethic. Because I remember you made a chart for

the kids when they were little and you called it the job chart. And before they could read, you would draw little pictures on there of their jobs. Like you'd draw a shirt for go get dressed, you'd draw a toothbrush for go brush your teeth, you know, and you'd have those on there. And the routine was after breakfast in time you just said, all right, now do your job charts. And everybody would run to the refrigerator and look at the job chart and they'd rush off to do it. And there was kind of an excitement about it because they had this sense of responsibility, which we as human beings love. We want to be responsible for things, we want to do them well. And that's something God's put in us. And so you as a parent can train them young. And then as they get older and they no longer need pictures, they can have words. And then after that they don't need words anymore because they've got their own planner or whatever that you've taught them to use. Their life can be just an orderly, godly life

MINDI:

And joy filled. That's what order brings is.

CAREY:

That's right. That's right. Now one other thing that we talked about when we were considering mindsets that you need to have around training your children is to be aware of things like lying and manipulation. You know, our kids can spin things to make it sound like they didn't really do what they did. And it can sound really convincing and it can kind of twist the circumstances to fit, oh I'm innocent rather than Yes I did hit my brother. So talk a little bit about that. What's your experience with that been like?

MINDI:

I think that every parent deals with their child being manipulative from early on. And we really have to be alert to notice this. We even do it ourselves where we try to highlight the good that we did, but we're not really admitting to the one little area where we did wrong. We do it to the Lord <laugh>. And so we want to catch our children in those areas of saying, well I kicked the ball to hit the wall, you know, instead of

CAREY:

Then the siblings going, no, no, he kicked it right at me. Yeah. You know? Yeah.

MINDI:

They're trying to deflect the blame that they hurt their sibling with the ball. So we want to teach them. No, you might have intended to kick the ball at the wall but you ended up hurting your little brother and knocked him over. So forget about what you intended to do, just go to your brother and address that and tell your brother, I'm sorry I didn't mean to hurt you. I'm sorry I knocked you over. And why don't you give him a hug and then help them hug. So you're instructing him about the whole scenario of what to do and how to forget about what his intention was because that's not what mattered. What matters that he hurt his brother, walk through it. This is what you should say and do with your brother.

CAREY:

Yeah. And all that while you're being aware that you're doing this, not to come down hard on them but to help them learn. There's not a need for lying and manipulation if you're honest, if you confess, if you just make it right, those strategies are not needed as part of your life. You're just living a godly humble life.

MINDI:

Right. And something that's also very important is when you catch your child lying. I've heard parents say, I'm just going to let them come to me on their own and admit to it. And I don't think that's helpful. I think especially when your children are younger and you realize that they've lied to you or lied to a sibling or a teacher, let's say go and help them to handle it rightly. Go and help them to repent. Bring it up to him because they're caught. Let them be caught and teach them, I heard you say this and that wasn't true. Why did you say that? When you go and talk to them, you can get to their heart as to why they lied. And then you can deal with their heart issue there, there and help them to know how God thinks about it. Lead them to confess to the Lord.

MINDI:

There's great joy in the repentance because then there's cleansing. You can hug them and thank them and say you forgive them. And then you can help them go to the brother who they lied to or their teacher or whatever. I mean it's a beautiful scenario how you can help them work through the whole thing. Because you got to their heart, their deceitful attitude was brought to the surface. The Lord is able to do something with that. The healing between them and their sibling can be dealt with. But if you just leave it, oh I, I'm just going to wait and see if they come to me and bring up how they lied, what good does that do? It does nothing. There's no teaching and training of the child's heart if you just leave

CAREY:

It. Yeah. I think sometimes that perception or that attitude might come from a wrong belief that people are good at heart and they're going to figure it out on their own because they're, that's not true. The Bible says we are, our heart is deceitfully, wicked <laugh>. And so our children are born that way. You, you don't have to watch very long to see a kid taking another kid's toy. Well that's because the heart is deceitfully wicked. We've got to train our kids about honesty and truthfulness and those kinds of things. All right. So let me summarize real quickly the basics that we've outlined here. We had tone of voice, we had encouragement and physical touch, kind of the same thing. We had clarity surrounding what's expected, uh, of rules and responsibilities and clearly defined and explain punishments. Uh, what's going to happen if the rules are broken. And then just an eye to watch for lying and manipulation, those kinds of things.

CAREY:

So now we want to give you a couple of examples of this kind of dialogue that might happen between a parent and a child. And we're going to use the example of a one to three year old little girl. So a toddler type situation and also a 10 year old boy. So as we go into these two examples, we have an assumption here in both these scenarios, we're going to assume you've already established or are establishing a regular cadence, a biblical instruction in your family. And you're modeling that through your life, through the way that you live and the attitudes you have in the home. Okay. So with those things kind of assumed, let's talk about that one to three year old girl. Uh, let's say that she is continually getting into the cupboard, under the sink, you know, the Drain-o, the dish washing soap, the real pads, you know all that stuff and you've got to do something about it. This is a training opportunity. What's that conversation between you and your little girl going to be like,

MINDI:

Well first of all, I would keep things that are the sink that I normally use, but I would not keep things during this young stage that could actually be deadly to the child because I, you know, what if I ran to

the bathroom or something like that and they go under the sink and they get into something. So during this stage when they're not totally trained, I just use wisdom and I don't have deadly things under the sink. Just Okay. But I do keep things under there and I don't, you don't

CAREY:

Lock

MINDI:

It up. I don't lock it up, that kind of a thing.

CAREY:

And let me just say you don't lock it up because you want to use it as a training opportunity.

MINDI:

Exactly. Exactly. So first of all, if I notice them going to the cupboard, then I use that as a training and they start opening it and I tell them no, I pull their hand away. Okay

CAREY:

Give me the actual tone of voice.

MINDI:

Um, I'll use Maddi, she's one of our daughters. I'll tell Maddi, No cupboard. I would say it like that. And I would pull her hand away and I would take her around and get her distracted with toys.

CAREY:

Okay.

MINDI:

If it were to happen again, I would probably say it in the same way, no covered. And I would touch it and then the third time I would be a little more firm and I'd say no, Maddie And I would swat her hand no cupboard.

CAREY:

And I remember sometimes watching you do this, you would, you would go and kneel down next to her by the cupboard and you might even tap the cupboard and you would say no cupboard while you're doing that. So she connects your word with the

MINDI:

Cabinet. Right. And I would look in her eyes, I'd make eye contact.

CAREY:

Okay,

MINDI:

Good. And so I would be purposely watching to see what she's going to do because many times sins going to attempt them to actually flat out rebel. And so they'll look at us and they'll crawl right over or walk right over to the cupboard to do just exactly what we told them not to do.

CAREY:

Let's say you have taken her over to some toys after you've told her no a couple of times and then you go back to whatever you're doing in the kitchen or the living room, whatever. And you notice she's looking over at the cupboard. Are you going to wait until she goes back over there or are you going to say anything when she's even looking?

MINDI:

You know, I've done both but many times when I'm wanting to actually train on that scenario, I'll let her go and I'll get up from my chair and I'll peek around the corner to watch and kind of hide so she doesn't know because I need to catch her in the act for the training that needs to happen, happen.

CAREY:

Yeah. So what would you say to a person who says, well you're like, that's like entrapment, you're like setting your kid up to get punishment that doesn't feel right.

MINDI:

Absolutely not. I'm not setting them up. I'm allowing her to go in a way that sin would naturally lead her. She's in a safe, protected, loving environment and I'm going to train her out of it. But she's got to have that so to speak, negative feeling of a little spanking to bring her into the training she needs to have. Just kind of like any kind of training of an athlete, no pain, no gain basically is what it's like.

CAREY:

Yeah. So yeah. Very good.

MINDI:

So let's say she does that and this is the second or third time that's when I would say no cupboard and I would spank her on the side of the, the leg.

CAREY:

Okay. So just on the fleshy part of her leg with your hand.

MINDI:

Right. And that so that she would cry. Yeah. And I would pick her up and I would hug her and I'd say no covered. And I would put her back down there and show her again. And in our situation at home, we did not have to give a spanking very much for them to be trained on something because of our consistency. Our kids got it. And they're like, okay, I know mom's serious. I know dad's serious.

CAREY:

Yeah, that's good. And let me say too that if you're successful with the cupboard, it makes the next thing even faster for them to learn because they knew you mean it and they know that you're going to win, so to speak. Now how would this be different if someone has an extremely strong-willed little girl? I mean

like it's been five times, seven times, 10 times they've spanked this little girl and she just keeps going back to the cupboard.

MINDI:

Well I guess I would question did they really spank them and

CAREY:

You mean hard enough?

MINDI:

Right. And if they and I would start using the rod. I mean we used a rod which is just a wooden spoon. Yeah. Which gave a little bit stronger sting to their skin. And I would encourage those parents to be very firm and clear and with three swats of a spanking and then take the child away and just stand there and be ready to spank. If they run back over to the cupboard, if there's a rebellious in them, then you just not let up.

CAREY:

Yeah. You've got to win in that situation. And I hope that doesn't sound callous to you parents who are listening when I say you've got to win, it's not about a competition with your kid, it's about you are going to beat the power of sin in them. You're not beating your child, you're beating the power of sin that wants to conquer them. You're, you're fighting for them and with them

MINDI:

When you have a strong little child, which we had a couple of them, you daily want to be asking for wisdom and discernment of how to train your children. Because there's times when we felt like those multiple spanking still wasn't getting to our child. Mm-hmm <affirmative>. So for example, we'll use the cup situation again. I would just take my child, pick them up and we would go to another room and just do something else. And I would say to myself, they will learn to not get into the covered on another day. Yeah.

MINDI:

Because it literally physically speaking, you don't want to keep on spanking their leg over and over and over and over and over again. I mean Yeah. Yeah. You don't want it to become raw. You don't want to physically hurt them. There's just times when they might need to break, they need to get away from it. But stay consistent. Don't lessen your standard and say okay, I'm just going to take all those chemicals out of the cupboard so that they can open it whenever they want. I mean don't lower your standard, be merciful and compassionate. Maybe they do need a little break from that training and go back to it later.

CAREY:

Yeah. And the reason you don't lower your standard is because the world they're growing up in is not going to lower its standard. The law of gravity is always going to be the law of gravity. And so if they step off of a high object they're going to fall. Life is designed that way by God. And we as parents are teaching them how to manage the boundaries. Life has inherent in it. And so you don't want to make it easier for them when they're going to be in a very hard world. Right. You've got to teach them how to wisely and with self-controlled deal with the world as it is.

MINDI:

Right. And then on the other side of it, we don't want to lower our standards because God doesn't lower his standard in scripture. He says Be holy as I am. Holy <laugh>. I mean that's, that's the highest standard that anyone would have. And so God and the reason why God's demands that is because he knows he's going to give us his Holy Spirit to help us.

CAREY:

That's

MINDI:

Right. So we never lower our standard that the Lord is wanting us to have for our children. We just ask for more discernment and wisdom of how to train our child to get the goal that they're need to get to.

CAREY:

That's right. And you like God are giving them what they need to attain your standard. And that is consistent instruction and the discipline when needed. All right. I think that's helpful. Let's go to that 10 year old boy. Now I'll paint a situation here in a moment, but let's do some comments here for a moment. About 10 year old boys about the possibilities that can be true of that stage of life for a boy say from eight to 11 or 12, something like that. They can be very obnoxious. I mean that's a word I remember hearing you use with our boys. Um, describe that for us. What are the kind of things that happened when a a boy in that stage is, is hitting his obnoxious stage?

MINDI:

Well first of all, I was kind of surprised when our oldest son was acting this way because I didn't have any brothers. And I remember asking you <laugh>, I think you're the one that said, that's just an obnoxious stage. And I'm like That's right. That's exactly what he's being, he's being obnoxious

CAREY:

<laugh>.

MINDI:

Yeah. I was just noticing what I noticed when our mainly sons would be obnoxious is they were kind of like trying to egg on their sisters. Kind of maybe pester them. They kind of got a little bit of a joy of of bothering them or

CAREY:

Seeing the response. Yeah. Hearing the squeal. Yeah.

MINDI:

Yeah.

CAREY:

<laugh>.

MINDI:

I don't know all that, you know that's in, in a boy's thinking in that. But

CAREY:

Yeah, they would even do toward each other at times where one of them is building a tower and the other one keeps accidentally knocking it over, you know, and it's just obnoxious. They're just being a pest.

MINDI:

Yeah. And I think many times it's coming from them wanting to be playful, wanting to have fun. Yeah. And so we're wanting to re redirect it into the right ways to be playful and to have

CAREY:

Fun. Yeah. Sometimes the kid thinks they're having fun but they don't have the emotional discernment to recognize it's not fun for the other kid and they need to be taught how to be considerate, how to care for the other person, that sort of thing. So here's our situation. Let's say it is this 10 year old boy and he's pestering his older sister. So she's in her room, she's doing her girl things, talking to friends on the phone, writing in her diary, whatever. And he just keeps coming in and pestering her in various ways that are, that are not kind. Okay. There's your situation. Uh, how would you approach that as a parent?

MINDI:

Well first all we might hear it going on or the older sister might come to me or or yell at mom. My brother's bothering me. So as soon as we're aware of the situation, I would always try to figure out what was going on and why was my son doing what was bothering his sister after I find out the why that many times would guide me in how to instruct him. Because sometimes it was he was genuinely wanting something

CAREY:

Or needing something. Yeah.

MINDI:

Or needing

CAREY:

Something. Yeah. Now let me pause for just a moment and point out something. You've already gone a step or two beyond what many parents will do. Many parents will just say, Kevin, leave your sister alone. And that's the extent of it. You've already gone further than that. Why?

MINDI:

Because in saying Kevin, leaving your sister alone, there's no instruction of how Kevin should think the next time he wants or needs that thing from his sister. There's no help except for a, in a sense of stifling or a squashing of his behavior. It's just a rule. It's putting rules on them instead of getting to their heart to help them to know how to think and feel.

CAREY:

Yeah. And that reminds me of a phrase we've said a couple of times to parents in, in counseling and things. Rules without relationship equals rebellion. It just always

MINDI:

Does. Right. And so when you're asking what's going on, what they were thinking, you're actually going to be encouraging a good relationship between you and your son, but also a good relationship between your son and your daughter and then also a good relationship between your son and Jesus. It's a beautiful thing that you can help train your child in in one little

CAREY:

Scenario. Yeah. Okay. So the boy pestering his sister, you're coming in discerning what's going on. I assume you're asking the sister questions, you're asking him questions, you're looking around the room to make sure all the things you see line up with what you're hearing, what's next?

MINDI:

I would bring up the wrong that the son is doing. That's not very kind for you to keep on bugging your sister. You know, look at her, she's doing her homework. Do you think that's being thoughtful? You think that's being loving? No, no. You know that you're right. Do you think Jesus will treat her that way? No. So you need to tell her you're sorry, you know? And then have him say he's sorry. And then let's say it was a scenario where it was something that he needed from the sister, then I could address the issue with this sister where I could tell her, did you realize that your brother was just needing this? I would say, you need to just kindly say, I can help you with it later. I need to finish my homework right now. I'm sorry I can't help you now, but I'd love to later. Something like that. You keep it positive, you're encouraging one another.

CAREY:

And what I see you doing there is you're going deeper than just the behavior, the actions you're, you're getting to the motivation and the mindsets behind those motivations. Because in the brother's case, you're teaching him consideration for his sister. She's busy doing something important. Maybe she's on a time crunch, she has to go to youth group later. So her homework's got to get done. You're trying to teach him to be considered of her circumstance and her needs in the situation. And that's a biblical concept. We're all taught to be mindful of others and to consider them more important than ourselves. Philippians chapter two. So you're teaching that to the son in the same circumstance, the daughter, you're addressing a mindset. She may have that. Well he's my little brother, he's just a pest. He's, you know, and you're helping her to see he's important too. He has needs, you need to serve him when it's appropriate.

MINDI:

Yes, I agree. That is very helpful to be able to think of it that way and to see the dynamic that's going on with your children and the relationship. And also there, I remember there's things that have come up where the younger sibling, I mean it might not only be, it might not be a son and a daughter scenario, it might be a younger sister to an older sister. And I remember at times the younger sibling was being obnoxious and irritating because they were wanting to have time with their older sibling. And through our questions we, we realized, you know, like they might say something like, well they're always busy and they never want to play with me. And then you realize there needs to be a better balance here. I remember times like that where we would get to the root of it and then I would help my older child to

be able to say to their younger sibling, I want to play with you. Is it okay if I get done with my homework first or I need to get done with my homework first, but I do want to play with you. And so we're getting to the heart of it where the child might be feeling hurt and the younger sibling is realizing they do like to play with me, but I need to be patient with their homework.

CAREY:

Yeah. You're maintaining the health of the relationship in the same time as you're dealing with the potential conflict that's going on. That's very helpful. Now what would you say if this is just an ongoing thing and the brother in our scenario continues pestering his sister either later that same day or the next day or the next week or whatever, how, how does that play out?

MINDI:

If you're noticing that it's something that's going on pretty consistently, you need to find out why. If there's a disobedient heart there, if there's a rebellion there, and sometimes even after finding out why you need to be able to just to tell your child, if you keep doing this behavior that is unkind to your friend or your siblings or mom or dad or whatever, next time I see you doing that, you're going to get a spanking. So you want to have time of explaining things and giving your child opportunity to succeed. But if they're doing it two and three times over, you need to clearly say, usually what we would do in our home, if they did a second time, we would tell them, if you do this again, you're going to get a spanking. We're preparing them, we make it clear to them and then we follow through the spanking next time.

MINDI:

And there's also another mindset that we started teaching our children. We noticed that when we were instructing them in obedience in a certain situation, that they would be slow to obey many times, cleaning up the room, clearing the table, whatever it might be. And we started realizing when they're being slow to obey, they're really having a disobedient heart. We had a phrase, if you are slow to obey, you are disobeying. So you need to have quick obedience. And we would tell them that we would remind them. And so that, that's an important way to instruct. Don't get into the habit as many parents do with their younger kids. They'll tell them, go clean up your room. But the kid is still sitting there on their, doing their video game and they're like, Johnny, I said to clean up your room 1, 2, 3. You know, I mean it's, it's silly to count for your child because you're basically letting them disobey. Yeah. And so just in your mind, quick obedience is true. Obedience delayed or slow obedience is disobedience.

CAREY:

Amen. Yeah, exactly. Because obedience isn't obedience if it's delayed, you know, so if when they demonstrate they're willing to disobey again after they know clearly, then some kind of punishment needs to come in there. Now I also remember you sitting down with our son at one point and saying, you are being obnoxious. I mean you were just straight up with him and you told him, do you know what obnoxious means? No, you explained it to him. You helped him see his behavior for what it really was and why it wasn't loving, why it wasn't considering his sister, you know, and how Jesus feels about that. I mean, Jesus was always in these conversations so our kids' conscience could be developed.

MINDI:

Yes. And I, I had those kinds of conversations because I wanted any type of training we would do, I'd want them to know what God thought about it. Most every time I would try to bring God's perspective

in, because when they leave our home, that's what they've got to have in their minds. That's right. What is God thinking about? How do I live life? Well, I need to live life the way God wants me to live life.

CAREY:

That is great. All right, well I hope those two scenarios are helpful for application on this. Prayerfully consider your current approach to training your children. Is it intentional or is it nonexistent? Is it defined and planned? Do you, I mean, I'm not saying you have to have a 12 point outline of exactly every scenario because you don't know what they are. But generally speaking, do you have a plan for how you're going to address misbehavior, how you're going to talk to their heart, how you're going to find out the truth? Those kinds of things. And then finally, are there things you need to change in your method or your approach or your mindset? Please take the time to pray through this. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you for the benefit of your children and for God's greater glory.

MINDI:

And if you're feeling overwhelmed as a parent and in this whole training scenario, ask the Lord to give you this strength and the motivation to do it. Because raising young children all the way to their teen years, it is a lot of hard work and you've got to be on top of it. You can't just float through your day. You've got to be alert and watchful to see what kinds of attitudes and behaviors are going on in your home with your children so that you can help them to know how to correct it. Ask Lord to give you that strength. Ask him to give you that insight and that discernment so that you can be a good trainer. It's kind of like a coach who of a football team. There's many players and he's got to, to be very purposeful to watch each player and in their positions. I need to help the quarterback know how to throw better. I need to help the kicker know how to kick better. You know? So I need to help my daughter know how to be loving to her younger sister. I need to help the brother to be loving to his friends. I mean, just all different scenarios that go on in the home

CAREY:

And those things transfer out into all the relationships of life. By the way, that is a very good football illustration for someone who's not into sports. Right? <laugh>. So Mindi, would you pray those things for our listeners?

MINDI:

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you so much for your wisdom and your guidance you give to us as parents. Thank you for your clear instruction that you give us through your word and through your Holy Spirit. I ask that you will do that for these parents listening that you will give them the thoughts and the discernment that they need to have in regards to training their children very clearly and precisely to the situation. Help them to know when to be merciful and compassionate or to be more firm and strict and give and enforcing discipline. I just pray, father, that you also give them clarity of how to be consistent and when to train and what to train about. I just pray that you'll encourage these parents, that you will spur them on through your Holy Spirit and that you will bring great joy and success and victory in their homes because of your work and their lives. In Jesus' name, amen.