



00:01 Hey there ladies, welcome back to our new month and our new topic. This month we're going to be talking about parenting a prodigal child.

00:10 And when we're talking about parenting a prodigal child, this could be a younger child or a teen who is showing signs of rebellion and kind of walking away from everything you've been teaching them, your values and your biblical instruction, or it could even be an adult.

00:29 The first thing that we need to remember here is what our parenting goals are. So here I want to share with you some of the most common purposes or goals that we probably all share.

00:41 First, we need to know what our parenting goals are. We need to realize that we're ultimately responsible and accountable for child training and instruction.

00:47 You all know the verses in Deuteronomy 6 where we're taught, where we're taught to teach our kids God's Word all the time like when we're sitting standing.

00:55 Walking, walking, lying down basically all the time we're supposed to be instructing our children in God's Word. Also keep in mind that we're seeking to train not just the mind but also the heart and the soul.

01:09 The desire to bond with our children and keep their hearts. That should be one of your greatest goals in parenting is to keep the heart of your child because we want to teach kids our values and when we lose their heart they're no longer open.

01:23 To our teaching and our instructions. So it's important that we focus on keeping their heart. And I'm sure that you have other purposes and goals besides those but the key thing is as Christian parents we must have an active.

01:37 Purpose and philosophy of teaching and training our children. The emphasis, this is a quote from a book Dave Sorson wrote called training our children to turn out right.



01:46 He says the emphasis throughout the Word of God is to train our children from their infants. To serve the Lord, to train them on purpose, to be righteous, to train them specifically to be godly, to particularly train them to be disciplined, to train them to do the things they ought to do, to train them

02:03 to walk in the Spirit. The goal of every Christian parent ought to be that his children grow up to be godly, not just good.

02:11 And I think many times as parents we forget what our position is. Our kids have been in trouble. We're not trusted to us by God and they belong to him but he gave them to us and put them into our care.

02:25 So I want to share some things that we need to keep in mind regarding the stewardship responsibility that we have.

02:32 As Christian parents and three things that are very important to remember. Number one, by God's design and plan, we as their parents are the authority.

02:42 Often we want to be our authority to be with us and to be happy with us. And because of that, we fail to exercise the authority that God has given us.

02:52 We should strive, obviously, to keep their hearts and have a good relationship with them. However, it's important to also keep the right balance and maintain their respect for you and the authority that God has given you over them.

03:06 Your kids need to realize that God is over you and then you are over them under the direction of God.

03:15 Number two, we need to bring our children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord like it tells us to do in Ephesians 6, 4.

03:22 The word for nurture there in Greek has the thought of curbing impulse and desire. And subordinating them to what ought to be done.



03:30 In other words, it means self-discipline. Much easier to say it that way. And much of our position as parents involves teaching our children self-discipline, which is a character trait.

03:41 And of course, other character qualities. If you're homeschooling, it's important to remember that one of the keys to education is self-discipline.

03:50 A quote here says, a major key to education is self-discipline. Discipline is, More important in the matter of proper behavior, so attention is held.

03:59 More importantly, the imposing of discipline and ultimately self-discipline upon the mind is a secret to ongoing education. Our job is to help our children develop.

04:09 Discipline and self-control. And then number three, we must remain constant and persevere in our parenting for the sake of our kids.

04:18 Perseverance, by definition, just means to persist in or remain. We must remain constant to a purpose, an idea, or a task in the face of obstacles or discouragement.

04:29 And we all face discouragement at times, don't we, in our parenting. I like the verse in Ephesians 6, 18, where it tells us, Praying always with, Discouragement will come in your parenting, and it just goes with the territory.

04:47 It's a normal thing. Sometimes we're just tired. At those times, it's extra important that we go back to our goals and priorities.

04:56 When your perseverance is waning, claim 1 Peter 7 or 5, 7, and 8, where it tells us to cast all of our cares on him.

05:04 Or he cares for you. Then it goes on and says, Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, seeketh, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

05:14 Remember that God wants you to protect your children. And Satan is a that God wants you to protect your children.



05:18 And Satan is a God is never stopping. He doesn't stop. He never quit seeking to devour us or our children.

05:24 He's always on the lookout to destroy them and us. So if we quit persevering, we're giving him an open door to do just that.

05:32 Okay, so next I want to share some encouragement if you do have a prodigal. But first let's look at our focus verse, Isaiah 55, 11, where it says, So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth.

05:43 It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish. That which I please and it shall prosper in the thing where to I send it.

05:51 If you do nothing else, stay faithful in teaching your kids God's word and then claim this verse when you see your child struggling maybe making wrong choices and turning in the direction of a prodigal.

06:04 Claim the promise that God's word will prosper and do what it's supposed to in that child's heart and life and it's going to accomplish it and prosper in it and for encouragement.

06:14 I want to share a little story. Many years ago when my kids were teens and young adults, I was feeling very discouraged about one of my kids who was actually a young adult and choices were being made by this child that made me feel like I had failed somewhere in the years of parenting.

06:31 My worst fears had come true. I had raised a prodigal child and there were so many questions I asked myself.

06:38 Of course the biggest one was, is this my fault? I was doubting myself as a mom and wondering if I had failed my child somewhere along the line.

06:47 And then with all of that inward doubt and those feelings of apprehension for that child's future, I began to seek encouragement for a parent or a prodigal.

06:55 And I started asking, okay, did I not live out my faith in a way that showed my child Christ through me?



07:03 And if you think about it, discouragement and self-blame are a few of the tools that the devil or our enemy used is to discourage us and causes us to have those negative thoughts.

07:16 They're tools of the devil and they are lies that you need to reject. The doubt that he places in your head can make you feel like you failed, but you also might then wonder if it's too light for you to be a light to your grown prodigal child.

07:31 But again, those are lies. You definitely can still be a light and don't blame this on your own failure. Those.

07:37 Those thoughts are discouraging. They're not helpful. So instead we want to focus on how we can pray for our prodigal child and leave that child in the hands of God.

07:47 And back to my, to the beginning of the story where I was discouraged. About one of my kids who was straying and definitely had become somewhat of a prodigal.

07:57 I was talking one night about it with my youngest daughter and expressing my concerns for her sister. As well as my feelings of failure.

08:05 I could sense my discouragement and she stopped me as I was talking. She said, mom, stop. You've done everything. Sorry, I have a catch in my throat.

08:16 She said, mom, you've done everything you can. You did your best in raising her and all of us. You obeyed God in how you brought all of us up and how you trained and taught us.

08:27 This is not your fault. Now, I'm sure. I mean, I know. I'm. I made many mistakes in my parenting with this particular child as well as all my kids, but I can truly say that like my daughter reminded me I did my best to obey what God told me to do as I raised my kids, my husband and I.

08:46 I prayed about it constantly. We sought God and we raised our kids the way we felt God told us to, and we poured our time and our energy into that.



08:54 So I needed at that point to let go of my guilt and trust God to guide me. This child back to him and realize that she knew what was right, but was an adult who had to choose and desire to do right.

09:08 In the book that Rob Bradley wrote, *Sovereign a Crisis in Christian Parenting*. I love how he says this. He says in the Christian life, it is important to understand that our highest success is not measured by the effect we have upon others, but strictly by our obedience to God.

09:25 We obey and speak the truth. God, there is no other. Kirboxa fruit. Parents therefore must do what is right and acquaint their children with Christ in his ways.

09:33 They must train, discipline, and instruct with the intent, obviously, of bringing maturity and leading their children to Christ. However, From God's standpoint, parents' success is measured by their obedience, not by how their children ultimately choose to respond to their influence.

09:50 Then he goes on and says, I once believed and taught that a parent could follow the right biblical step. And they guaranteed of raising children who remained faithful to God from childhood into their adult years.

10:01 However, as my own children age and I discovered that they were self determining individuals with their own walks with Christ.

10:09 I came to the alarming realization that I had a lot of control over their outside, but not their inside. They were like all adults who were faced with the choice of whether or not they were going to listen to Christ and follow Him.

10:22 It was a rude awakening for me when I saw that even the best parenting could not exempt an adult child from making the wrong choice when faced with temptation.

10:31 I do believe that by our influence we can greatly increase the likelihood our children will grow up to love and follow Christ, but I see





nothing in scripture that guarantees while trained children will never succumb to temptation.

10:45 That's really encouraging because it reminds us that we need to do our best and parent to be able to get the right thing and leave the results up to God.

10:53 One of my favorite things to tell parents over the years of speaking at conferences is the thing that we need to work as parents as though it all depends on us, but then pray as though it all depends on.

11:04 God, because ultimately we need to do what he has told us to in our parenting and then let his word prosper, let him work in the hearts of our children and bring about those changes and get ahold of their heart.

11:17 And then. That brings me to that verse that I mentioned. This will be our focus verse Isaiah 55 11. So show my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth.

11:25 It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please and it shall prosper. And the thing where to I sent it.

11:34 Keep in mind and always remember that if you poured God's word into the hearts and minds of your child during their formative years, even though they may be wayward now or heading that direction.

11:45 You never know when one of those verses or passages of scripture will speak to their heart and mind and combat to protect them from wrong choices or to bring them back to where they should be and bring them back to God.

11:58 Claim. That promise it will encourage you and keep trusting God to work in the heart of that practical child. Some action steps that I want you to take this week.

12:08 Number one, write out Isaiah 55 11 and put it in a spot where you'll see it regularly. Each time you see it, stop and quickly pray for that practical child asking God to let his word prosper and what he



sent it to do and to accomplish what it needs to in that child's heart and life.

12:25 Number two, check how you're doing in the three areas to remember those are that you're the authority by God's plan.

12:32 It's your responsibility. Bring your kids up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and third you need to persevere and stay consistent.

12:40 Write down. The area above that you're struggling with and then make a goal to help you do better this week in that area that you've chosen.

12:48 So not a lot to do but it's a start. Stay encouraged and remember to claim God's promises with that promise.

12:55 Radical child.