

G P S

For Grandparents, Parents and Seniors

By Rick Shrader

Four Phases of Parenting

Life is a long time. That's what I've said to my children as they planned to marry. Life is a short time. That's what I think when I look back over married life. The periods of parenting are like a telescope that keeps opening and stretching into long and thankful years. These stages each have their own developing stages.

Pre-Parenting

Being single is that time of anticipation and seeking God's will. Some remain single for life (1 Cor 7:7) and singleness can be a devoted life. Most will become engaged and marry. This is a time to be choosy and long-suffering. Marriage is a covenant among a man, a woman, and God. The newlywed stage comes quickly and is a time for building the home to seek and honor God, a time for husband and wife to arrange the home to last a life-time.

Parenting

Children come and the home transitions from quiet and orderly to noisy and exciting. Life begins at conception and the announcement of a new family member is a wonderful time. The growing years follow quickly from infants to toddlers to kindergartners. Mother and father are putting their parenting philosophy to the test, training up a child in the way he should go, bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, leading them to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, hearing their witness and watching their baptism. The teenage years can be glad and rewarding if the earlier years have been honoring to God but they aren't easy. They are busy and stressful and prayerful. Young adults who love the Lord are worth all the tired and sleepless nights. Still, one by one they leave and start their own families.

Post-Parenting

There is that odd time when the house seems so empty, between the hustle and bustle of students to the empty-nest of reflection. Parenting is supposed to be a temporary job. You raised them to do this whole process again themselves. You can wait for the grandchildren because in the meantime your children need you to be godly examples of the home they are trying to build in God's will. They will parrot your earlier instructions, they will call and seek your godly advice on life's matters, they will face new and odd challenges from their own generation, and, most important of all, they will need parents who pray and whose prayer avails much.

Grand-Parenting

Life begins again, it becomes grand, when you see your children's children. You are the proud on-looker who now vividly witnesses what life is all about, how God has designed it to multiply and have dominion as believers in a sinful world. All of your effort is now more than worth it. You will be the gray-champion for a while because those little feet come running to you and you gladly gather them into your arms. But you will soon have to let them go and grow. You will watch from afar as your own children raise their own children. That gray champion needs to become the godly example and counselor. The senior years are the culmination of all that has gone before. Wear them both humbly and proudly. Your life has never meant so much. Be thankful.

“Both young men and maidens; old men and children. Let them praise the name of the Lord, for His name alone is exalted; His glory is above the earth and heaven” (Psa 148:12-13).

Book Review

Biblical Foundations for Manhood and Womanhood

Wayne Grudem, Editor

It was in 1991 that Wayne Grudem and John Piper edited *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*. This book, edited only by Grudem, written in 2002, is a compilation of addresses given at a conference in Dallas, TX by various authors. The major messages in the book are done by Grudem and Bruce Ware with single chapters by five other authors. These are an update on the ongoing issues of family life relating to submission, headship, and complementarity. Although the writings are now 20 years old, these issues continue to be central in family and church life. Grudem does a long chapter on the Greek word for “head” (*kephale*) showing that the word never means “source” alone (feminism’s long-standing contention) in the New Testament and is always used of a person who has leadership over another. Grudem also does a chapter titled, “The Myth of Mutual Submission as an Interpretation of Ephesians 5:21.” He shows that “submission” (*hypotasso*) is never used of a husband’s submission to the wife. In addition, “one another” (*allelous*) in 5:21 must take the meaning of “some to others” and not “everyone to everyone.” Bruce Ware’s contribution relates to the headship within the trinity and its relation to complementarity. He writes, “Arguments will be weighed, and support will be offered for the church’s long-standing commitment to the trinitarian persons’ full equality of essence and differentiation of persons, the latter of which includes and entails the eternal functional subordination of the Son to the Father, and of the Spirit to both Father and Son.” Submission then, as seen in 1 Cor 11:3, always flows one-way from the head. (Note: I’m not always theologically aligned to Grudem or Ware, but they are very helpful in these areas of complementarity and headship.)

Statistics

A *Pew Research Center* Analysis in February 2021 titled, “Boomers, Silents, still have most seats in congress, though numbers of Millennials, Gen Xers,

is up slightly.” Their results showed the changes from the 115th Congress to the 116th, to the 117th (current) Congress. The Silent generation (born 1928-1945) decreased from 10% to 9% to 6% over those three Congresses. They now have the least number of seats in the House of Representatives. Boomers decreased also from 62% to 54% to 53% but they are still the largest group in Congress by far holding 230 seats in the House and 68 seats in the Senate. Gen Xers rose during these three Congresses from 27% to 32% to 33%. Millennials rose from 1% to 6% to 7%. “When comparing the ages of new and continuing House members, the gap is widest among Democrats, who as a whole have a median age of 60.6. The median age of the 206 Democrats who were reelected is 61.9; the 17 newly elected Democrats have a median age of 50.7. . . The 165 Republican House members continuing into the 117th Congress have a median age of 58.7, while the 44 new GOP representatives have a median age of 53. For all Republican House members, the median age is 57.3.” Accessed 10/27/22.

A Quotable Quote

“At the age of 83—after having traveled some 250,000 miles on horseback, preached more than 40,000 sermons, and produced some 200 books and pamphlets—John Wesley regretted that he was unable to read and write for more than 15 hours a day without his eyes becoming too tired to work. After his 86th birthday, he admitted to an increasing tendency to lie in bed until 5:30 in the morning!” (2022 Family Times)

On the Lighter Side

I have never been able to tell the difference between an alligator and a crocodile. One has a fatter snout, but I can’t even remember which one does. They say they are of slightly different color, one species is usually larger than the other, one is faster than the other, one is more aggressive than the other. But I read the other day a difference between the alligator and the crocodile that made sense to me. One will see you later, and the other after while. That, I can remember!