

Manna For The Morning Series

Pre-Teen/Young Teen (5th-8th grade)

Intro:

Psalm 127:1-5

- Our children are gifts from God.
- Being parents to our son Lorenzo has been one of the best experience our lives.
- It is very rewarding and very challenging at the same time
- Share:
 - o Cecille: We lost our first pregnancy. I have a condition that makes it hard to conceive. Felt discouraged. Prayed to God and he gave us Lorenzo after 5 years of marriage.
 - o Vince: I felt so happy seeing him for the first time. A few weeks later that happiness turned to anxiety knowing that I brought a soul into this world and now he will have to fight to make it to heaven. I know Satan will be gunning for him on day one. I decided that I will be there for him every step of the way. This was the first time I felt the responsibility of being a parent.
- In our quest to become the best parents for our children let us not forget what the scripture says “Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain.” (expound)

The Big Picture

- Consider nature
 - o In parenting as well as everything, we need to look at the big picture
 - o God loves color, variety. Our stories will be different. (expound)
 - o Transformation is part of Gods plan
 - o We go through phases (cocoon to butterfly)
 - o Infancy, childhood, adolescence, young adult, middle age, old age
 - o We will focus on the early adolescent stage today
- Understand phases/stages of human development
 - o what are age appropriate behavior as far as human development is concerned
 - o This helped us not to over react to behavior that are not positive
 - o This also gave us opportunity to teach our son about God’s expectation and how to develop a Godly character despite of emotions, situations or peer pressure.
- Cecille: Each stages of life I believe is there for a reason
 - o Most of the time as parents we are focused on what to teach our kids
 - o We must consider that each stage in our child’s life is an opportunity for us to learn and grow in our parenting, our marriage, our character and our relationship with God
- Understand the world they live in (2 Tim 3:1-4)
- Share about my neighbor – Technology is the enemy, pointed out what is wrong with millennials. He was frustrated and can’t relate.
- What are your goals for this phase?

- What do you want your son to learn / What do you want to teach?
- How are you going to respond to different situations?
- What do you want to learn?
- What kind of discipline will you do?
- Share about our goal for Lorenzo

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (Expound on scripture)

- Relate my experience with Distribution system steps - Building, Restoration, Reliability example – relate to parenting with faith, hope and love
- Explain

1. Faith (Building – use standards)

Romans 1:16-17

- What do you believe God can do for your child/family?
- What do you think God’s vision is for your child/family?
- What is your own vision?
- Do you believe God can change the things that are going well
- Paul said that he wasn’t ashamed of the Gospel because “in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed--a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."
- Although there are many books that have been written about parenting, the Bible should be the primary standard in building our children’s character and our family’s convictions
- What are some things that we use as standards other than the scripture? (Our opinions, our experiences, books, emotions etc.)
- Share: Building the backbone for Electrical System using the right standards
 - What happens if I don’t use the right standards? Chaos, system failure, no electricity
 - The same thing is true with our life if we don’t build using God’s standards.
- Cecille: Proverbs 22:6
 - Sometimes I worry that my son is not changing in his ways regardless of how much I correct him to the point that I get frustrated and angry
 - I always remind Vince to do a devotional or talk to him using the scriptures because I know that God’s words are greater than mine and have more impact in his life
- The world’s standard on what it means to be a man or a woman is so radically different from Gods standard.

- The world says that when you reach a certain age you are now an adult and you are now legal to drink, smoke and do whatever you want.
- The bible teaches and trains us how to be a Godly man or woman regardless of age.
- Titus 2:1-8 (discuss briefly)
- Build as an expert builder by following God's standard
- Share: Senior engineer asked me How would you build it if it was your house?
- Storms will come. Build knowing that it will come.
- When did Noah build the ark? – before the storm!

2. Hope (Rebuilding/Restoration – use blueprint)

Romans 15:13

- What happens when things aren't going as we expected?
- Each one of our kids will have their own set of challenges.
- What are some challenges they can face at this stage? (awkwardness, insecurities, peer pressure, feeling left out)
- Organize your thoughts
 - What do you think the issues are?
 - What you want to talk to your child about?
 - What are they hearing based on what you are saying?
- Consider their Feelings
- Talk to them about how you feel
- Keeping the line of communication is key.
- Take time to explain things and share your own conviction based on scripture
- Share: some things from my own experience
 - Wanted to end the day on a positive note - Good things bad things talk with Lorenzo
 - My thoughts/conviction I shared to my son about: vices, foul language, feeling bored and what the alternatives for these are
 - Cecille: My vision I shared for him: to be a good student, a disciple, mom's protector, big brother to other kids
- We expect them to respond only in one way – the way we told them to.
- We need to be prepared for any type of response – negative or positive
- We can learn and teach from failure
- Apologize and be humble if you need to
- Set healthy boundaries
- Share about storm restoration.
- Sometimes a storm hits us and we feel like everything that we have built has been destroyed and that there is no hope.

- Paul expressed to the disciples in Rome “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit”
- Hope goes hand in hand with trust.
- Do not say or feel that you are done
- Don’t give up the ground that you already won/covered because you feel frustrated and hopeless
- Trust God even in impossible situations
- Cecille: Share about difficult challenges moving here to Indy and leaving the life that we knew and how it affected our family.

3. Love (Reliability - Improvements)

1 Corinthians 13: 4-8

- Share Reliability concept to strengthen the grid.
- Love strengthens relationships
- Love saves, heals, restore, transforms.
- What else?
- When our faith gets weak or shaken and our Hope gets dashed, Love – unconditional love allows us to respond in a Godly way.
- (Discuss ff:)
 - o Love is patient, kind, does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud, does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.
 - o Does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.
- I always go back to this scripture when I want to see if how I treated my wife or son is based on love or not. If not, I need to repent. I need to apologize.
- Based on the scripture that we read, what area do you need to grow in more? (patience, humility?)
- Seek to improve as a parent and learn how to love unconditionally.
- Love never fails.
- Cecille/Vince: Share closing thoughts.
- Parenting pass it on.