**God’s Guidance for the Nurturing of Our Children**

**Week 4: It’s About The Relationship**

**A. The Climate in the Home**

 1. What kind of parent is God? What is the climate in His Home like?

* Hebrews 12:5-11
* Luke 15:11-24
* Psalm 103:8-14
* Malachi 3:17 “They shall be Mine,” says the Lord of hosts, “On the day that make them My jewels (special treasure). And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.”
* John 14:1-3 “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. **2**In My Father’s house are many mansions; if *it were* not *so,* I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. **3**And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also.

2. What is the climate in your home?

 a. Warmth, joy, harmony, love, fun, ….

 b. Functional, each retreats to own room and own screen, …

 c. Do the parents appear (or are) distant, distracted, frustrated, …preoccupied.

3. Dads: you are responsible to set the climate

* “We should, from the dawn of reason, endeavor to make our children feel that our favor is their richest reward for good conduct, our displeasure the severest rebuke for misbehaving. Happy the parent, who has attained to such a skill in government, as to guide with a look, to reward with a smile, and to punish with a frown.” John Angell James, A Help to Domestic Happiness, p. 143.

**B. Keeping Your Child’s Heart**

 1. You got it at birth…and in some ways will always have it.

 2. Do you still have your child’s heart?

* Does your child like to spend time with you?
* Does your child see you as a friend as well as a parent?
* Does your child value your opinion?
* Does your child value his/her relationship with you?
* Does your child have a genuine desire to please you?
* Is your child concerned to not damage the relationship?
* IS your child loyal (invested in the relationship) to you…even when not with you?

3. Ways you can lose your child’s heart:

 a. If your “provoke to anger/wrath”

* Discipline out of anger: “Never chastise in a state of wrath. Some parents can never punish except, when it never ought to be done, when they are angry. This is passion, not principle; and will always appear to the child as if it were intended, more to appease and gratify the parent’s bad temper, than to promote his/her welfare. No parent, in such a state of mind can be in a condition nicely to adjust the kind and degree of punishment to the offence; it is like administering medicine scalding hot, which rather burns than cures. God waited till the cool of the evening before he came down to arraign, try and punish our first parents after their fall.” JAJ, p. 143
* Critical, perfectionistic, hold to standard above age level, unfair, unjust, show favoritism, embarrass

b. If you are always tired, distracted, into yourself or your own interests and not them

c. If you are a hypocrite…have lost their respect

d. If they never hear that you love them, like them or show now real desire to be with them

e. It may be the child’s fault: they are strong willed, disobedient, what the Bible calls a “fool”.

* Proverbs 17:10 A rebuke goes deeper into a man of understanding
    than a hundred blows into a fool.

4. How to keep your child’s heart (or get it back if you have lost it):

 a. Spend lots of time with your children: Quantity & Quality

* The myth of “Quality Time”

b. Tell you kids (often…daily if possible!!):

* You love them
* You like them
* You are proud of them
* Compliment them often

c. Touch you kids (often…daily if possible!!!)

d. Actively engage in their lives…their successes, struggles and challenges

* Listen: “active listening”
* Ask questions: know who their friends are, their classes, who they eat lunch with, what music they are into, their hopes…dreams…fears, what do they enjoy doing & what are they good at (so you can best guide them vocationally)
* Do the stuff they like: even if you don’t like it!!!
	+ Play their video games, listen to their music, watch their movies

e. Family Dinner…a must…worth fighting for!! (NO CELL PHONES)

f. Family Vacation (No friends or girl/boy friends)

g. Regularly schedule special events

h. Guard against “over programing” the kids to the detriment of family life…push back hard!!