



“Stewards Not Owners. Ambassadors Not Rulers”

Matthew 25:14-30, 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Sunday | April 23rd, 2017 | Pastor Patrick Bowler

CONSULT THE SCRIPTURES

Matthew 25:14-30
2 Corinthians 5:17-21

(See also 1 Chron. 29:14; Ex. 19:5; Job 41:11; Ecc. 5:19; Ps. 50:10; Hag. 2:8; Ex. 19:4-6; Lk. 19:20-23; 1 Cor. 4:1-2)

CONSULT THE SCHOLARS

[Paul David Tripp] “Parenting is not about exercising power for change in your children. Parenting is about your humble faithfulness in being willing to participate in God’s work of change for the sake of your children. Parents, here’s what you need to understand: God has given you the authority for the work of change, but has not granted you the power to make the change happen. But we buy into the delusion of thinking again and again that the power is ours. We think that if we speak just a little bit louder, or stand a little bit closer, or make the threat a little bit scarier, or the punishment a little more severe, then our children will change. And because the change doesn’t happen, we tend to bring it on even stronger. Oh, sure, you can scare or reward your children into temporary change. You can temporarily buy them off or scare them off. You can exercise temporary control over a child’s behavior, but what needs to change in order for that change to last and bear fruit is something inside the child. In parenting, what you are dealing with is way deeper than the need for behavioral change. What you’re always dealing with is the need for heart change, and we simply have no power at all to change another person’s heart. Now here’s the point: if as a parent you think that you have power that you don’t have, you will do things that you should not do and you will fail to do things that are vital to do.”¹

DISCUSS

1. The Parenting Series began with this simple idea: “As parents, we do not have the power to do for our kids what we want most for them.” What do we want most for them? And why is it so difficult to accept the above idea?

2. Pastor Patrick said that as parents “We are stewards not owners (Matt. 25). We are ambassadors not rulers (2 Cor. 5).” What is the difference between a steward and an owner, or an ambassador and a ruler?

3. What does owner/ruler-parenting look like?

4. What does steward/ambassador-parenting look like?

5. Paul David Tripp identifies 3 “power tools” that we as parents often resort to using: fear, reward and shame. Discuss each. Which are you more prone to?

6. What immediate applications can be made in light of this text?

7. Pray for one another...

Notes:

¹Paul David Tripp, *Parenting* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), p. 61.