

## CA 18 EMAW 18 TURNING THE HEARTS OF FATHERS TO THEIR CHILDREN

### Music Theme

**FOSTER:** I'd like you to imagine yourself in this scene. It is the Olympic Games and you are standing before the judges. But you notice something strange. You and your family are the judging panel. And the event is... how you've done as a father.

You watch yourself on the judging panel and wait to see how you judged yourself as a father. You give yourself... a 9.5! That's really great. Next, you see your wife. She hesitates, and then puts up score of... 8. Not bad. You can live with that.

Next on the judging panel are your kids. They are writing diligently. Their score of you as a father seems to be taking a long while. And then your three kid's scores come up at the same time.

You gasp... and I say... Welcome to Champions Arise. I'm Foster Braun and I am with Kent Darcie. The question you're all wondering is why did you gasp? How did your kid's score you as a father? We'll look at how kids score us and at three biblical principles for raising children when we return to Champions Arise. **Music in**

**FOSTER:** We've spent the last couple of programs discussing marriage and what a godly husband looks like. I encourage you to go to our website [championsarise.org](http://championsarise.org) and listen to those programs if you missed them. But today we turn the corner, and will look at fatherhood from a biblical perspective. But before we get to that, Kent, what would your scores be if your family were on the judging panel?

**KENT:** Challenging question. I have a good relationship with our three kids.

**FOSTER:** They are all adults right?

**KENT:** Yes, so it's a different dynamic now. Thinking back when we were in the midst of it... when our kids were younger, I worked a lot and I would like to have spent more time with them. But my wife and I worked hard to create a Christian home, and teach Christian values.

**FOSTER:** Teaching Christian values is important.

**KENT:** True, but how we teach those Christian values is even more important. Lonnie Berger in his book "*Every Man a Warrior*" lists three biblical principles on raising children (giving them Christian values) that can really help dads to be godly fathers and role models for their families and the community.

**FOSTER:** So let's look at those three principles.

**KENT:** Sure. The first of the three biblical principles for raising children is "it is the father's God-given responsibility to train his children." Let me say that again. "It is the father's God-given responsibility to train his children."

This principle is based on Ephesians 6:4 which states, "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."

The Amplified Bible gives us a clearer picture of Ephesians 6:4. It reads, "Fathers, do not irritate *and* provoke your children to anger [do not exasperate them to resentment], but rear them [tenderly] in the training *and* discipline and the counsel *and* admonition of the Lord."

**FOSTER:** A couple things stood out to me in that version: don't exasperate (or provoke) our children to resentment, and rear our children tenderly in their Christian training.

**KENT:** The consequences of not doing that can be severe. I heard of a man who was a successful business owner, but had not been successful with his children. When he was older, he was working on a household building project with a friend one day. The friend happened to ask why his son wasn't helping him with the project. The businessman's response was "My son is an idiot. He doesn't know how to do anything."

**FOSTER:** That's a terrible way to think of your own son.

**KENT:** Yes it is. And when that businessman died a few years later, his son didn't even come to his dad's funeral.

I think that's an example of what Ephesians 6:4 means by "*Fathers, do not irritate and provoke your children to anger [do not exasperate them to resentment],*

But the other half of that scripture says," instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."

**FOSTER:** Does that mean we sit with our kids and do Bible studies all the time?

**KENT:** All the time? No. But some of us never do it. Our first biblical principle for raising children is, "it is the father's God-given responsibility to train his children."

Ephesians 6: 4 does not say Mothers, bring up your children in the training and instruction of the Lord." Though they are very important to the process.

Ephesians 6: 4 does not say churches or youth pastors, bring up the children in the training and instruction of the Lord." Though they are a part too.

Ephesians 6: 4 does not say private schools, bring up the children in the training and instruction of the Lord."

Ephesians 6: 4 says Fathers, bring up your children in the training and instruction of the Lord."

**FOSTER:** Ok, I need to stay with this because I have more questions. But I want to let any listeners that joined us after this program started know that this is Champions Arise, where men challenge men to be the godly men God intended us to be. I'm Foster Braun and I'm with Kent Darcie.

Kent, I understand that we, as fathers, are to teach our kids about God. And I realize that this requires more than just sitting down and reading the Bible with our kids. But what does this look

like? Can you give us some examples of what it means to instruct and train our children in the way of the Lord?

**KENT:** One way is to look at Jesus as our model. On occasion Jesus taught in the synagogue—in the church if you will—but by far the large amount of His teaching was out in the world.

Walking through a vineyard

Sitting among a group of children

Talking by a well with a Samaritan women

Observing things at the temple where Jesus saw the widow putting in her last mite.

And its interesting to me that that scene at the temple would be equivalent today to sitting with your kids on a bench in the bazaar, or at the market place, or in the food court of the mall. For the man who is having his daily quiet times and knows God's word, there is teaching opportunities everywhere. Deuteronomy 6:5-7 says:

*"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."*

But teaching your children the Bible is also done without words. In our last two programs we spoke about being godly husbands. You don't need to teach your children **the words**, *"Husbands love your wives as Christ loves the church and gave Himself for her."* You live it. They should experience it in your home so when they **do** hear that verse in church, they think, "Wow that's just like Mom and Dad."

**FOSTER:** Ok. That makes sense. What is the second biblical principle for raising children?

**KENT:** The second biblical principle is "Children get their self-image from what they believe their Father thinks about them".

**FOSTER:** "Children get their self-image from what they believe their Father thinks about them". That is a powerful statement when you really think about it.

**KENT:** Yes. Proverbs 17 verse 6 says "the glory of children are their fathers." And, my friend, if that's not true in your home, I encourage you to learn this simple formula.

Time equals love. Time equals love. Not things equals love. And I would dare to say, to your children, a paycheck isn't love either.

And I'm sure some of you are thinking, *"That paycheck puts a roof over their heads. That's love."* No. That is something God commands you to do. To provide for your family. Love is what nurtures their souls and reveals to your children what our Heavenly Father is like. And I'd say this is true even when their teenagers. The time spent may be different, but it's still important to have.

**FOSTER:** We have to remember that children see things differently and that God created them that way.

**KENT:** Good point. I'll give you an example. Lonnie Berger, the author of "*Every Man a Warrior*" tells the story of a medical doctor who worked many hours, and made lots of money, but was having trouble with his kids. So Lonnie counseled the doctor and he decided one Saturday to cancel his golf game

➤ **FOSTER:** that he deserved because he works so hard

**KENT:** and he does. But this Saturday he stayed home and played basketball for a couple hours with his kids in their driveway. And he enjoyed himself, but didn't think much more of it. But later that weekend, each of his kids came to him separately and said "Dad, thanks for playing ball with us."

**FOSTER:** Wow. That must have really impacted him.

**KENT:** It did. He decided that he only had his kids for a few years before they were grown and gone. They were 12, 14, and 16. So he stopped playing golf as much. And when this father took this step, his children received the message, "you are important enough for me to change my schedule and spend time with you. You are worth my attention."

And time with our kids can mean, grabbing a meal at the local fast food place with a young child, or playing a game with your older child. Listening to music with your teen, maybe running together. Whatever their interest is, you make time to do it with them. And if that means grabbing lunch and shopping for dresses with your daughter, you do that.

**FOSTER:** At least that way you can make sure it covers everything

**KENT:** Very true! [laughter] Spoken like a true dad! But my friends, whatever you do, the time you spend with your children now, you'll never regret later.

**FOSTER:** So our first biblical principal for raising children was "it's the father's God-given responsibility to train his children. The second principle was "children get their self-image from what they believe Dad thinks about them. Kent, what's the third biblical principle on raising children?"

**KENT:** The third biblical principle on raising children is "the words spoken to a child will determine his or her destiny." "The words spoken to a child will determine his or her destiny."

Proverbs 18 verse 21 says. "The tongue has the power of life and death."

Ephesians 4:29 says, "*Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.*"

When we speak with our kids (or our wives) that scripture should come to our minds.

- Only what is helpful for building others up,
- According to their needs
- And that it may benefit those who listen

And Foster, this may not have been modeled for us. Many men who are listening had fathers who were either absent physically or mentally—meaning they were in the home, but they never

applied the principles we're discussing. Remember the story of the businessman we told earlier that called his son an idiot? I wonder what his father was like.

The good news, my friend, is you can choose to apply these principles regardless of what type of father you had.

**FOSTER:** Kent, what about the man listening who hasn't applied these principles, because he didn't know them. And now his kids are either teens or out of the house. Is it too late for him?

**KENT:** Absolutely not. God can do amazing things with a man who submits to him. If you have young kids, start today. If you have teens, it may take a little effort and persistence to get in to their world, maybe even an apology, but if you are maintaining your quiet times with God, and staying in his word, He will guide you.

And if your kids are grown, maybe invite them out to eat, and tell them that you are just learning what you should have done, apologize to them, and ask for a second chance. Don't be pushy, but don't give up either. Don't forget that your wife is part of your parenting team. Ask her for advice. God created her to be intuitive when it comes to relationships.

**FOSTER:** Thanks Kent. We can all be encouraged that God wants to turn our hearts toward our children and equip us to be godly fathers.

### ***Music Theme in***

### **Program Close**

**FOSTER:** Thank you for listening to Champions Arise where men are equipped and strengthened to meet their God-given potential. Today we discussed how God wants to turn the hearts of fathers to their children. This program was based on Lesson 5 in the book "Every Man a Warrior," Volume 2, by Lonnie Berger. You can learn more about his book and listen to this, or any of the programs in this series at our website [championsarise.org](http://championsarise.org). I'm Foster Braun with Kent Darcie. Thank you for listening to Champions Arise. May God mold you into the man He knows you can be.