

PARABLE OF A PASSIVE PARENT

Teen/Parent Meeting 8/27/00

Text: 1 Samuel 2-4

Introduction:

There are two ways to learn

- Learn by studying what “to do”
- Learn by studying what “not to do”

This lesson is one in which we will be studying what “not to do.”

We live in a day when most families are lead by “passive parents.”
It is the norm. It is acceptable. It is the state of our society and culture.

There is a difference between passive parents and busy parents.
Almost all parents are busy in this culture... but not all are passive.
Some use their busy-ness as an excuse to be passive.

Statistics tell us that most parents spend less than a few minutes a day engaged in an active relationship with their children. (being together, doesn’t necessarily count.)

Passive parenting has some real temporary benefits... but some tragic long term consequences. There is a heavy price to pay for the short term convenience that is afforded.

The Principles:

- 1. Passive Parents Focus More on Surroundings than Spiritual Character**
Surroundings don’t guarantee godliness
 - 2. Passive Parents Defer Their Parental Responsibilities to Institutions**
 - 3. Passive Parents Fail to Personally Introduce Their Children Personally to God.**
See 2:12 Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; (PASSIVE ELI... WHY DIDN’T THEY KNOW THE LORD?) they knew not the LORD.
 - 4. Passive Parents Diminish the Significance of Their Child’s Sin in Their Own Minds.**
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See 2:17 *Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the LORD: for men abhorred the offering of the LORD.* (INDICATES THAT IT WASN'T GREAT BEFORE ELI? WHY?)

5. Passive Parents Avoid Feeling Responsible to Deal with Their Children's Failures

See 2:23 *And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? (ASKED THE QUESTION BUT AVOIDED DEALING AUTHORITATIVELY) for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people.* (HE KNEW THE PROBLEM, HAD BEEN APPROACHED BY PEOPLE WHO FELT HE WAS THE SOLUTION)

6. Passive Parents Fear the Ultimate Confrontation that Restraint Requires

See 2:23-24 *And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? (ASKED THE QUESTION BUT AVOIDED DEALING AUTHORITATIVELY) for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people.* (HE KNEW THE PROBLEM, HAD BEEN APPROACHED BY PEOPLE WHO FELT HE WAS THE SOLUTION)

Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD'S people to transgress. (ELI GAVE A VERBAL WARNING BUT FAILED TO CONFRONT AND DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM.)

RESTRAIN – to weaken or made faint or dim. To diminish.

7. Passive Parents Ask Surface Questions but Avoid Heart Confrontations and Authoritative Mandates

See 2:23 *And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? (ASKED THE QUESTION BUT AVOIDED DEALING AUTHORITATIVELY) for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people.* (HE KNEW THE PROBLEM, HAD BEEN APPROACHED BY PEOPLE WHO FELT HE WAS THE SOLUTION)

Passive parents avoid the root spiritual battles by dealing with surface behavior

8. Passive Parents Consider They Have Done Their Duty in Giving Verbal Warnings.

See 2:24 *Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD'S people to transgress.* (ELI GAVE A VERBAL WARNING BUT FAILED TO CONFRONT AND DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM.)

9. Passive Parents Fail to Intercede and Mediate for Their Children

See 2:25 *If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him?* (ELI COULD HAVE INTERCEDED FOR HIS SONS... IF NO ONE ELSE.) *Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them.* (GOD'S GIVEN SOLUTION WAS AVOIDED)

10. Passive Parents Bypass Biblical Solutions for Heart Problems

See 2:25 *If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him? (ELI COULD HAVE INTERCEDED FOR HIS SONS... IF NO ONE ELSE.) Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them. (GOD'S GIVEN SOLUTION WAS AVOIDED)*

11. Passive Parents Have Access to the Truth from God's Word and God's Man

See 2:27 *And there came a man of God (GOD SENDS THE TRUTH TO ELI... EVEN MEN OF GOD NEED TO HEAR FROM MEN OF GOD.) unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house?*

12. Passive Parents Dethrone God First in Their Own Lives for Selfish Reasons

See 2:29 *Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded in my habitation; and honourest thy sons above me, (WHOA! THE REAL ROOT PROBLEM... ELI HONORED HIS CHILDREN ABOVE GOD!) to make yourselves fat (A DIRECT REFERENCE TO "CREATOR" OR BEING GOD TO YOURSELF!) with the chiefest (THE BEST AND FIRST PART) of all the offerings of Israel my people? (ELI WAS ALSO PROFITING FROM THE SINS OF HIS CHILDREN AND PARTAKING OF THE OFFERINGS WRONGFULLY – THIS WAS A SELFISH DESIRE AND PERSONAL FAILURE THAT KEPT ELI FROM CONFRONTING THE REAL PROBLEM)*

13. Passive Parents Allocate Relatively Small Amounts of Energy Into Parenting but Find Large Amounts of Energy for Personal Interests or Career Advancement.

14. Passive Parents Honor Their Children Above God

15. Passive Parents Fail to Deal With the Sins of Their Children Because of Their Own Unresolved Sin Issues

16. Passive Parents Rewrite God's Destiny for Future Generations

See 2:30 *Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; (PASSIVE PARENTS REWRITE GOD'S DESTINY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS) for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.*

17. Passive Parents Know the Heart and Mind of God but Do Not Do It

See 2:35 *And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do (ELI KNEW BUT DIDN'T DO) according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever.*

18. Passive Parents Usually Ignore God Given Perception in Their Own Hearts

See 3:13 *For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; (ELI KNEW BUT DIDN'T RESPOND) because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.* Eli knew (perceive, knew by experience, was aware of) They think... "If I don't know about it, I can't give account for it."

19. Passive Parents have a "What Will Be Will Be" attitude

See 3:18 *And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good. (ELI'S COMPLACENT – WHAT WILL BE WILL BE ATTITUDE)*

20. Passive Parents Will Bear the Blame for Their Own Neglect, but Not the Blame for their Children's Sins

See 3:13 *For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; (ELI KNEW BUT DIDN'T RESPOND) because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.*

God judged Eli's house, not because of his son's sins... but because of Eli's neglect.

Every human being has a free will. Good parents have kids who make wrong choices. Bad parents have kids who make right choices. The parent bears the responsibility for responding biblically, to the choices of the children.

Conclusion:

Be an active parent. Be a loving but firm, authority who actively introduces your child to God... to His mandates... and His direction for their lives.

You cannot mandate godliness, but you can energetically fulfill your parenting role. You can determine your families' course and lovingly, yet strongly, lead the way.

Active parenting takes TIME, ENERGY, PERSONAL SACRIFICE, and HARD WORK. Too few adults in our generation have made this kind of involvement a priority in their lives...

Proverbs 19:18 *"Chasten thy son while there is hope..."*
