

The Lynden LINK

Vol. 16 - Nu. 1, August 27, 2017

Cornerstone Christian School
~~ Lynden, WA ~~

Chairman's Report

Protecting and Maintaining Reformed Education

We live in a changing world. A world where we have access to seemingly endless information. A world where external cultural influences are all around us. We can see how these cultural influences affect God's people. We have seen how gradually over time cultural influences have affected our sister churches in the Netherlands. How do we prevent adverse cultural influences from penetrating into our school and into the hearts and minds of our children?

It has been clear from the moment of the fall of man, (Romans 5:12) that the devil is working to do his best to undermine the church and God's people. He will use whatever means that he can to turn hearts and minds away from God and towards rebellion and ultimately destruction. Obvious attacks are easy to detect and to fight against. It is the covert and veiled attacks against God's people that are harder to recognize and so harder to fight against. As God's people, we must be aware of these attacks. We must learn to discriminate and differentiate between what is good and what is harmful. (1 Corinthians 1:18-21)

As adults, we have more life experience than our children. Hopefully, we have been reading and studying scripture for many more years than our children. It is through the preaching of the Word, the reading and studying of scripture that we learn about our God. We begin to understand what His wishes are, how he is to be served, what activities we should be doing, how we should act, and who we should be associating with. As parents, we should teach our children about God and his will for them in this life.

Our school is a parent-run school. It is very important for the school that it has clear direction and support from the parents who send their children to our school. The school needs to maintain consistent standards that are in line with the word of the Lord. As such the school relies on the parents to teach their children about how they should serve the Lord and interact with others. The school teaches all the subject areas with God as the focus and the Word of God as the

foundation of Truth. This is done so that there are consistent standards and an environment where cultural influences are identified and can be separated from the Truth. Support from the home is critical and it is key in fighting external influences that would pull our children away from the Lord.

We live in a broken world. One where sin penetrates our lives and influences our thinking. This should not be an excuse for us to give up the fight of faith. Rather in recognition of this we will see that this is an endless battle while we are on this earth (Genesis 4: 6-7). It is one that tries to tire us out and wear us down.

We must be vigilant in this battle. We only have a very short time while our children are with us. We need to teach them before they grow up and become independent so that they can have a family of their own. (Proverbs 22:6). Let us use every opportunity to teach them of God's word and talk with them about different cultural influences and what does and does not fit in the lives of those who serve the Lord. (Proverbs 1)

If we do this we can teach them and protect them with the Truth of the Word of God and the Armor needed for the battle (Ephesians 6:10-17). Then maintaining the importance of reformed education will be apparent and cultural influences can be recognized and fought against. In this way, we can protect and maintain the Reformed education of our children. We must rely on the Word of God to show us the way, the truth, and the life. If we do this He will live in us and we will reflect his Glory. We will be thankful for the sacrifice of His Son and live a life wholly devoted to Him. If this is done there will be no room for worldly ideas and cultural influences.

Regarding items related to the school's operation: Soon the children will be going back to school; a reality to look forward to. It is a blessing that we have our school. A place where our children can openly proclaim the faithfulness of the Lord and learn about his great majesty.

We also wish the Staff of Cornerstone a blessing over this coming year. May the Lord equip you with all that you need in your teaching duties. May he uphold you and give you strength as you take on your very important task of assisting in the teaching of God's children.

At this time, I would also like to give a special welcome to our new staff member – Janita Willis. We are very happy to have you at our school! Cornerstone Christian School is blessed to have you and we all look forward to your enthusiastic teaching for our children. May the Lord be with you in your task and may it also be a blessing to you.

Recently we have also received the resignation of Henry Klos as a member of the school board. He has the very busy and important task of being an Elder and has decided that he would like to give this his full and undivided attention. We thank you for your service. The school has benefited greatly from your time on the board. We also thank you for your contributions on the Education Committee and thank you for all that you have done for the school in this regard. May the Lord give you strength as you serve God's people in your capacity as Elder.

Given the resignation of a board member – we have decided as a board - to move up the date of our next membership meeting to the month of October. This will allow us to fill the vacancy sooner and provide an earlier start for the new board members. If you know someone who would be a suitable person to be on our school board – please let the board know.

Through the summer, the board has been working through various evaluation documents for the Board,

Principal, and Sub-committees. We have found this to be a very worthwhile activity as this gives an opportunity for accountability and to have a vehicle to recognize room for improvement. These evaluations will be a regular part of the boards yearly calendar.

The board has also begun work digging into different parts of the strategic plan. This will be a regular part of the school board agenda as we work through this important document. We will use this as a “living – breathing” document that is always being worked with or added to. We hope that this process will have the desired effect of improving our school where ever possible.

As school board we thank you for your continued support and wish you strength as you live and serve our God.

For the Board – Darren Leyenhorst

School Theme:

Knowing God

Great is the Lord and
greatly to be praised.

-- Ps. 48:1

Short Reports of the Board

Short Report, Cornerstone Christian School Board July 10, 2017

The chairman opened the meeting with a reading of Proverbs 8 and prayer. The minutes from Part I of the previous meeting were approved with no changes. The agenda was adopted with no changes.

There was no incoming mail.

The Board reviewed the latest Principal's report. Items of focus included: a request regarding the planned barricades for the fire lane; a request regarding distribution of the Strategic Plan to the membership; a request for input about a potential Building Management course for next school year.

R. Faber provided a verbal update on the current work items of the CBM and on how the committee is functioning as a whole.

Under General Matters, the Board reviewed its annual calendar. D. Leyenhorst provided an update on the latest happenings with the land development south of the school property. The Board completed the annual evaluations of both the Board and Principal. The Board reviewed the evaluations of the IT Committee, Ed Comm, CBM, and Finance Committee. The minimum GPA requirement for the CCS Scholarship fund was raised to 3.0.

Action items were reviewed and the next regular meeting was set for September 5th at 7:30pm.

Part I of the meeting was concluded.

After a short break, Part II of the meeting was opened. Minutes from the previous month's meeting were approved with no changes. The agenda was adopted with no changes.

Incoming mail was reviewed.

S. Hofford shared the latest Treasurer's report. Main items of focus included: an update on dues/tuition

owing; an update on the current state of the pledge drive. Information regarding a new PayPal donation link on the website. More information on this will be provided to the membership in the near future. On behalf of the SMA, R. DeMooy reported on an upcoming membership expiration.

Under General Matters, the Board discussed the recent departure of a member family. Action items were reviewed. H. Klos closed the meeting with prayer.

Treasurer Report

The 2016/17 fiscal year came to a close on July 31. Thankfully, it can be reported that we finished the year in a good financial position. Thank you for your prompt and willing payments, donations, and volunteering efforts, and thanks be to God for His blessing on our daily work so that we have the resources to continue operating CCS. There will be an official report of our finances at the fall membership meeting.

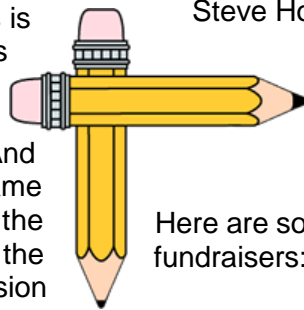
The largest part of our budget is salaries and benefits for our staff, most of whom are classroom teachers. For 2016/17, salaries and benefits were 87% of our budgeted expenses. Clearly, paying our teachers is our largest financial obligation. But of course, this is how it should be. We are a parent-run school, and we have made the decision to seek assistance in the task of educating our children. And we get that assistance from the teachers! At the same time, parents can and should be involved in the educational process. Here is an excerpt from the Parent Handbook, under the "Expansion of Vision and Educational Goals" section:

- *Ensure parental involvement.*

We believe that parents have the primary responsibility of educating their children (c.f. Deut. 6:4-9; Eph. 6:4). This has practical implications both for parents and for the manner in which the school executes its task. Parents will want to be involved in their children's schooling and the school will take steps to ensure that the parents can be involved. School policies and procedures regarding such matters as discipline, participation of volunteers, communication, academic achievement, and curriculum development will foster parental involvement. Parental responsibility and involvement are cornerstones to a relationship of mutual respect between teachers and parents. Parents will appreciate the assistance they receive from teachers in meeting their obligation to educate their children. Teachers, knowing where the primary responsibility for educating covenant children lies, will respectfully support parents in their awesome task of raising covenant youth.

As we begin a new academic year, it is good to remember that this is how things are structured. If we didn't have assistance from the teachers, we would have to fill that instructional gap in some way, either by ourselves or through some other institution. Parents delegate a significant task to our teachers, and of course "the worker deserves his wages". So, we will continue to do all we can to appreciate and compensate the work of our staff. We expect a lot from them, and we can be thankful for the dedication and professionalism they bring to their work.

Steve Hofford



Here are some updates on our current and upcoming fundraisers:

The Keystone Project has begun building their third house, foundation is in the process of being built. Once again the committee will be asking for your participation on this project. Please respond favorably to the volunteer emails coming to your "in-box" soon.

You're invited! Cornerstone Christian School Golf Classic - Lynden WA - Saturday Sept 9

Calling all golfers!! The Cornerstone Christian School community will be hosting our 7th annual fund raiser Golf Tournament on Saturday, September 9th, 12:00 pm at Homestead Golf Course in Lynden WA. No previous golfing experience required!

The golf format will be "best ball" tournament style of play. After golf, we will enjoy a banquet dinner catered by Homestead with silent auction, door prizes and much gezelligheid. We've finalized a great roster of corporate sponsorships and now it's time to begin registration for our individual players.

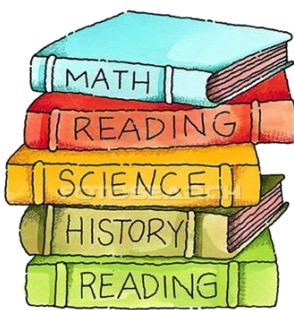
If you joined us last year, you know just how much fun it is! To register your team or as an individual golfer, please visit www.cornerstoneschool.us (click on CCS Golf Classic) or check out our Facebook

page. Please fill this form out for number of golfers and or number of dinner tickets that you would like, along with your payment, and pass the forms to the undersigned listed below. If you do not have a complete foursome to sign up, we will assign you to a team. Or pay at the door (credit card accepted). The fee for golf and dinner is \$175USD per person and if you just want to attend the dinner, there are a limited amount of dinner/silent auction tickets available for \$75 per person. Proceeds from this event will benefit Cornerstone Christian School.

Everyone goes home a winner and with a prize! Top prizes include iPad minis, Kindle Fires, GoPro helmet cams, hybrid clubs, and much more. Thank you for your help in making this Cornerstone community event a success!

Please contact, on behalf of the CCS golf committee,
Ben Faber (ph # 360-815-1326) or email golf@cornerstoneschool.us

The Homestead 15 is rapidly approaching! Planning is in full swing, and we are excited about our third annual race. Please consider whether you are able to help as a volunteer on the morning of Saturday, Sept. 16. Also, we'd love to have more people sign up to run or walk (5K route only) the race as well! We are hoping for a really great turnout at our race -



Homestead is generously donating 100% of the profits to CCS! So far, registration is quite low, so we'd love to have as many of you participate as possible - so invite your family, friends, and neighbors! Please contact Janice DeMooy if you have any questions, or if you'd like to volunteer or sign up to run or walk on Sept. 16.

The second annual **Bun on the Run** fundraiser is just starting to get into full swing!

Do you find yourself scrambling in the morning, putting together a haphazard lunch for the workday? Do you find yourself along with your co-workers eating out for lunch due to the convenience factor? Solve your and your co-workers problem while supporting a great cause by grabbing a tasty, energy packed bun while you are on the run! These Kaiser buns are bursting with your choice of two different combos of meat and cheese, and they make a great quick lunch if you are in a hurry.

Individually packaged, they are the easiest meal you can find!

We would like get the word out to as many people as possible in the community so if you think you may have an opportunity to sell these buns to a friend, or at your work place, or with another business in town, please contact one of the committee members for assistance and we can set you up with all the information you need!

Nathan C, Dave H, Jeanette B, Janet B, Marcia F, Christine H, Natalie H, Ryan V

Education Committee Report

During the summer, the Ed. Comm. has no scheduled meetings, so there is nothing new to report on our activities. In light of this, we'll take this opportunity to give some background information on one of the Ed. Comm. tasks: curriculum review.

What exactly does curriculum review entail? It's a bit of a two-pronged approach; looking at a given subject curriculum in the big picture, then looking at that curriculum more closely at each grade level. For the big picture, the Ed. Comm. looks at the subject area across all grades. This past year we compared our history and geography curriculum mainly with Christian schools in BC and with Washington state public school curriculum guides. Our focus was on the elementary level. We checked for potential gaps in the content that our students will be learning throughout their years at Cornerstone. We noted that the WA state program devotes a whole year in fourth grade to the study of Washington state history, plus three years of US history (5th, 8th and 11th grade). After considering the options, it was decided to make a few changes in our course of studies to ensure the

students have a good grounding in their local and national knowledge, but also in balance with relevant ancient and world history.

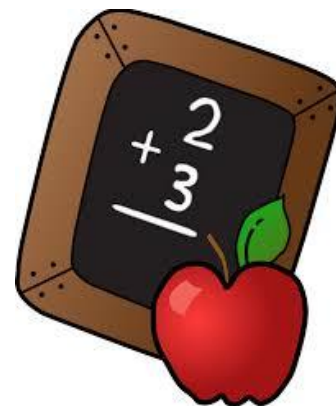
It is important for our staff and for any new teachers who might join our staff to have a clear picture as to what each course entails. We have a binder/document for each subject at each grade level which can be added to by staff each year. This way anyone coming in can find the subject rationale, core competencies, Big Ideas, scope and sequence, plus resources available for teaching each course. We have worked closely with the staff (mainly elementary staff in our history review) in order to perfect what was already in place. Thank you, teachers, for your opinions and contributions to the curriculum review process!

Curriculum content makes its way into the classroom setting, and students need to study and learn. Do they enjoy this? One of the aims of the school is to "encourage every student to develop a love for learning" (Parent Handbook). It may seem that a student who can achieve high grades loves to learn

while a student who struggles academically does not. But a closer look might reveal that high grades do not necessarily reflect that the student loves to learn, and vice versa. God has given each of us natural abilities and strengths, and most people also have a dominant learning style. This could be visual, auditory, or tactile; learning by seeing, hearing or touching/doing, or some combination of the three. In addition to how we learn, we also have different interests and things we enjoy learning about. We as parents at home and also our staff in the classroom have the delightful task of teaching our students in the way in which they can best learn, presenting interesting material to them in a way that “grabs” them. Ideally this is the way in which learning is enjoyable and exciting for students and makes them eager to press on and learn more. Our

staff makes good use of well-written books, plus videos, experiments, field trips and other ways to help the students internalize different subject matters. Often it takes a lot of effort on the part of staff and students but teaching and learning something well has many rewards!

Christine Hofford



Principal Report

What excitement as we prepare for a new beginning! So many unanswered questions for the child who will enter the classroom for the first time, for the high school freshmen, for the first year teacher, for the children entering a new classroom with a new teacher...so many firsts. A brand new book bag, new notebooks, folders, new pens, pencils, crayons, markers, new clothes, and new shoes. New subjects, new projects, new assignments, new activities and new opportunities.....

Every day is new, exciting, and an opportunity to start over again. With God's gift of each new day we *can* begin again. All the sins, failures, mistakes, and disappointments of yesterday (and last year!), *can* be left behind as we press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling in Jesus Christ. His mercies are new each and every morning (Lam. 3). This new life in Christ is fresh. Thank and praise God for new life and a fresh start in Him! Thank God for His forgiveness, salvation, mercy, and love.

Servant Leadership

During our staff meetings this past week we've focused on our roles through the lens of servant leadership. After Jesus stooped to wash his disciples' feet in John 13 - He made it clear: *I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you* (vs. 15). Jesus submitted his own life to sacrificial service under the will of God, and he sacrificed his life freely out of service for others. As teachers of covenant children we wish to be *Christ centered* in all aspects of life and teaching, *committed to serve* the needs of others before our own, *courageous to lead* with power and love as an expression of serving, *consistently developing* others into servant leaders, and *continually inviting feedback* from those we wish to serve (students and parents). This is an awesome

responsibility and a high standard to live up to. However, we don't do it in our own strength. We have the assurance that the Holy Spirit is working in our hearts "to will and to work for His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). Please pray that we would have the patience and strength to follow the lead of Christ in being faithful servant leaders.

Calling - Mature Young Men

Attached to this issue of the LINK is a stimulating article on the "godly training for life" for Christian sons. (I trust there is enough application there to be helpful for training our daughters too). In the Christian school context, we delight to see young boys striving to grow up to be mature, responsible, godly young men. As the article points out – this is so very counter-cultural. Nowadays "young men aspire to boyhood" wasting time "consuming entertainment, playing games or wrapped up in social media". So, how ought a godly, young man engage at school? He should be giving lots of evidence of being responsible (organizing his work, turning his homework in on time), respectful (towards teachers, volunteers, peers), engaged (quietly paying attention during the lessons, following instructions, asking questions) and well-behaved (obeying school rules, up building speech). Our young teens have a responsibility to be servant leaders too, following in Christ's example. As we know and experience – this does not come naturally. Parents have equal responsibility to train, to spend time in relationship, to encourage, to discipline, and to set them on the path to know God in intimate relationship.

Student/Servant Leadership

This year, under the leadership of Ms. Willis, we have plans to change up the way the student leadership team is organized. In a nutshell, STAMP will be open to all high school students. There will be an 'elected'

Executive team consisting of a president, secretary and treasurer. They will be joined by the leaders of the sub-committees of STAMP. We would appreciate your support in this new venture by encouraging your sons (and daughters) to consider being part of the new student leadership team format. We particularly focus on the young men as, historically, when STAMP was open to all high school students, it was mainly the young ladies who volunteered to take up a role on the student leadership team. While not everyone can or will have a seat on a committee – there will be plenty of opportunity for students to be ‘followers’ and servers – for the benefit of the school. A willing attitude to serve and be involved goes a long way to establishing a ‘new order’ in the student leadership team.

Community Service

The month of August has hardly been quiet on the fundraising front. What a hive of activity at the Cornerstone Cafe and the Keystone house! It's been an invigorating experience to be part of these terrific initiatives. Each endeavor has a fantastic group of leaders (aka as organizers, cheer leaders, and quality controllers). And, what a great job they do! Hats off to our dedicated organizers and a hearty thank-you to

all those who came out to serve in one capacity or another.

Our school moms have done a great job cleaning the school building after our renters vacated the building. Our CBM members have also been busy chipping away at ‘the list’ of regular maintenance. It's really like the list that never ends! The IT committee members have worked hard at getting all our computers setup again. Thank-you, all, for your dedication and support for Cornerstone Christian School.

First Day

The start of school is just around the corner. The first day is this coming Tuesday, August 29. You're invited to the opening assembly at 8:10am in the American Reformed Church building and afterwards you're welcome to join us in the school building for some refreshments and picture taking opportunities.

We look forward to your continued involvement, support and prayers throughout this new school year. Be encouraged *“my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord”* (1 Corinthians 15:58).

Ladies Aid Report

And just like that, a new school year is upon us. We hope that staff, students, and parents alike were able to have the time to relax and rejuvenate so they could be ready for another year of learning! May God bless the teaching, the learning, and the volunteering that goes on this year.

This past week was a flurry of activity for the school community as we undertook the running of the Cornerstone Café at the NWWF for the second year in a row. We'd like to take the time to thank not only the many, many volunteers who took time out of their week to take a shift, but also to the ladies who worked tirelessly behind the scenes for months in advance to make this fundraiser a success. Lydia, Irene, Stephanie, Debby, Kelli, and Alyssa-thank you for the countless hours of planning, cooking, overseeing and execution over these past weeks; your positive attitudes and example of servant hearts does not go unnoticed or unappreciated! From early accounts, we

look to have surpassed our profits of last year, so stay tuned for final profit numbers!

Looking forward to the fall, we have the apple pie fundraiser to start out our year of fundraising! We still need one committee member for this, so please let a Board member know if you are willing to help out in this way.

We are also looking for a few more ladies to put their names up for nominees for the Ladies Aid Board. It is not a huge time commitment, and I can speak from experience that it's a great way to get involved in the school and appreciate all the work that goes on behind the scenes!

On behalf of the Ladies Aid,
Rianne Kruyswijk



17/18 School Calendar

Aug. 29 – First Day of School
 Sept. 4 – Labor Day
 Sept. 28 – Christian College Fair
 Oct. 5 – In-Service Day
 Oct. 6 – Fall Break
 Oct. 9 – Columbus Day
 Oct. 11 – PSAT Test Date
 Oct. 27 – HS 1st Qtr Reports
 Oct. 30,31 – HS P/T Conferences
 Nov. 10 – Veteran's Day Observed
 Nov. 17 – Reformation Program
 Nov. 22 – Elem Term 1 Report Cards
 Nov. 23 – Thanksgiving Day
 Nov. 24 – Thanksgiving Break
 Nov. 27 – Early Release (11:55am)
 Nov.27, & 29 – Elem P/T Conferences
 Dec. 15 – Last Day of School 2017
 Dec. 18 – Jan 1 – Christmas Break
 Jan. 2 –First Day of School 2018

Jan. 15 – Martin Luther King Day
 Jan. 19 – HS 2nd Qtr Reports
 Jan. 22, 23 – HS P/T Conferences
 Feb.9 – Prof. Development Day
 Feb. 15, 16 – Mid-Winter Break
 Feb.19 – President's Day
 Mar. 2 – Elem Term 2 Report Cards
 Mar. 5- Early Release (11:55am)
 Mar. 5&7 – Elem P/T Conferences
 Mar. 23 – HS 3rd Qtr Reports
 Mar. 30 – Good Friday
 Apr. 2-6 – Spring Break
 May 4 – Public Speaking Contest
 May 10 – Ascension Day
 May 28 – Memorial Day
 June 1 – Sports Day
 June 4 – Quad School Track Meet
 June 7 – Eighth Grade Graduation
 June 15 – Last Day of School/Sr. Graduation

Board:

Chairman:	Darren Leyenhorst
Vice-Chairman:	
Building Liaison:	Ron Faber
Secretary:	Jeff Brown
Treasurer:	Steve Hofford
Staff & Membership Admin	Rick DeMooy

Building/Maintenance Committee

John DeBoer	Ron Faber
Jon Kruyswijk	Jan VanSabben
Kam Veldman	

Education Committee

Jon Dykstra	Christine Hofford
Darryn Kleyn	Rianne Kruyswijk
Bernice Vreugdenhil	

IT Committee

Ray Buitenbos	Ron Faber
Dave Kruyswijk	Jack Marissen

Finance Committee

Nathan Chase	Janice DeMooy
Brian Hendricks	Steve Hofford
Jan Kottelenberg	Kim Sytsma

Library Committee

Ellen Davis	Shona Doornbos
Debbie Johnson	

Ladies Aid Committee

Alyssa Brown	Ranelle Faber
Rianne Kruyswijk	Kim Sytsma

Administration Staff

Darryn Kleyn	Principal
Karla Leyenhorst	Bookkeeper
Kari VanDiest	Secretary

Teaching Staff

Grade 1/2:

Shari Kruyswijk	Bible, Math, History, Art
Janet Faber	LA, Music, Science
Darryn Kleyn	PE

Grade 3/4:

Debbie Johnson	Bible, Math 3, LA3, Science
Ellen Davis	L.A 4, Music, History
Stephen Houweling	Math 4
Darryn Kleyn	PE
Karen DeMooy	Art

Grade 5/6:

Lynette Van Hofwegen	
Ellen Davis	Music
Janita Willis	PE

Grade 7/8:

Stephen Houweling	
Janita Willis	History, PE
Debbie Faber	Art
Jack Marissen	Science

High School:

Wayne Chase	Bible/History/Math
Debbie Faber	Art
Darryn Kleyn	PE, Web Design, Bus. Math
Janita Willis	English, Yearbook
Jack Marissen	Science, Math
Darlene VanStaalduinen	Spanish

Wanted - mature young men

Godly training for life

Michael Willemse

In the mid-eighties, singer Bonnie Tyler lamented the disappearance of a standout kind of man, a hero, a man she could depend on when she sang "where have all the good men gone?" These words could serve as a meme for the age in which we live. Jane Butterfield used the same words to title an article in which she says "Why aren't normal men yearning to be good men? Good men devote their lives to serving their families as dependable loving husbands and caring fathers. Where have they gone? ... Good men are faithful. Good men love their wives with every fibre of their being, and good men make good husbands, good fathers and godly leaders. It is a heavy calling, and a mighty responsibility."

Once boys aspired to adulthood. They looked forward to growing up and becoming a man like their father. Nowadays men aspire to boyhood. They dodge responsibility and defend their right to play. This attitude is demonstrated in expressions like "boys never grow up they just get bigger toys" and "he who dies with the most toys wins." It is little wonder that many young men aspire to do little with their lives.

So how are fathers to raise their sons to be men? Ephesians 6:4 says "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead raise them in the training and instruction of the Lord." So, what does it mean for men to raise their sons in the training and instruction of the Lord and not to frustrate them? "The training and instruction of the Lord" is a broad term which takes in all of Scripture but I want to suggest six specific things dads need to teach their sons. These six things must be taught "life on life." In other words, our sons must not simply hear us saying these things - they must see these truths lived out in our own lives. Failing to teach our sons these things will exasperate them - so will teaching them but failing to live them.

Teach them about grace

The most basic thing a dad must teach his son is that he is a sinner in need of grace. We must share with our sons, the big story of the Bible. That a good God created a beautiful, perfect, world and that He placed man there as His appointed ruler over all He had made. "We were made to rule on God's behalf, son - second only to Him. But we wanted the top job, so we rejected God's command and tried to seize power for ourselves. This shattered our relationship with God, with each other and with the world He had made. " Dads must teach their sons how sin has profoundly affected every part of our lives. It has made us proud, selfish, greedy, angry, irritable, violent, jealous, deceitful, lustful, discontented and disobedient.

We need to do more than simply correct wrong behaviour. We also need to probe underneath the behaviour to show how it springs from hearts that love and worship the wrong things. But we do this in order to show our boys their desperate need for God's grace in Jesus and to assure them that this grace is given to all who repent and trust in him.

Fathers also need to teach their children that receiving God's grace is not a one-off. They need God's grace every day afresh. There will never come a day this side of heaven that they can get by without Jesus. We need to teach our boys to be quick to repent and seek forgiveness, assuring them that God's grace is able to cover every sin

and restore every relationship. This is probably a harder lesson for young men to learn. God has made them to initiate and lead, to press on and to endure, and this will often mean that they are more stubborn and headstrong than our daughters. If they are to learn to be quick repenters, we will need to show them what this looks like by being quick to own our own sins and failings and seek their forgiveness. Also, when they seek our forgiveness, we need to be quick to show grace. Teach them about grace.

Teach them all of life belongs to Jesus

When we teach our boys about God's grace in Jesus, we need to guard against a self-centered view of salvation. This goes along the lines of "I'm a sinner worthy of God's judgement - Jesus has paid for my sins and I have a place in heaven - problem solved, now I can live as I please!" Teach your son that Jesus is now King of kings who claims "all authority in heaven and on earth." We, as redeemed people are citizens of his kingdom, living under his rule and bringing that rule to bear on all of our lives. As his representatives, every part of our lives will tell people something about Jesus.

This means that we cannot divide our lives up into "me time" and Jesus time. It is all His time! "So whatever you do, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (1 Cor 10:31). But our sons need to see that this is an exciting adventure - we are God's people, through whom He is taking back the world from the evil one, who are already beginning to enjoy the life He has in store for us now. Living under Christ's rule is not a burden but a joy - it gives meaning and purpose to even the smallest things we do.

If there is one thing that captures a biblical view of manhood, it is loving self-sacrifice (think Eph 5:25). Jesus - the perfect man - laid down his life in service to his Father and he calls us to do the same. As dads, we need to offer our lives to God gladly as living sacrifices (Rom 12:1). One of the simplest ways we do this is by gladly giving ourselves to our wives and children. When we come home after a hard day's work, we need to engage with our families, enter into their lives, find out where they are at with the Lord and lead them in His ways - not zone out in front of the telly.

Dads also need to particularly teach their sons to resist the spirit of the age which tells them they are entitled to play. It is nothing short of tragic that young men waste some of the most productive years of their lives in front of a screen - however large or small - consuming entertainment, playing games or wrapped up in social media. These activities consume huge amounts of time and produce absolutely nothing. We need rest and recreation, so that we can press on in following Jesus but leisure should not become an end in itself - and dads need to show this by example! All of life belongs to Jesus.

Teach them the church is precious

The Bible teaches us that God is gathering a people for Himself from throughout human history and from every tribe, nation and language. Fathers need to teach their sons that Christ died for the church and that, in His grace, God has made them part of Christ's body. When people who by nature are very diverse come together as one body and are united in praising God, this is a powerful testimony to the truth of the Gospel. It's worth noting that Eph 2:1-10 which speaks about individual salvation is immediately following by vv11-22 which speaks about Christ gathering one people in whom God dwells by His Spirit. Our sons need to know that they are part of that body. It is in the church that they will experience a foretaste of heaven. It's in the church that they will grow in holiness. It's in the church that they will form relationships which will endure for eternity. Full participation in church life is vital for healthy Christian life.

As fathers, we need to show our sons that the church is precious. We need to show it by our active participation - worshipping twice each Sunday, taking part in a home group, serving as we are able and ministering to brothers and sisters in need. We also need to show we love the church in our speech - speaking well of the church leadership and of fellow members. A great way to do both of these is to find ways in which we can serve the church together - participate together in a church working bee, go to a Bible study group together, go together to help clear a widow's yard etc. Our sons need to know that the church is precious.

Teach them faith is for sharing

Another way that we can shrink our view of God's work in Jesus is to act as though our faith in God is only a personal thing between us and Him - and what other people believe and choose to stake their lives on is their own business. There is a huge contradiction when we tell our children that believing in Jesus is a life or death issue and then show no concern for our neighbours who do not know Jesus. Our sons will rightly ask whether we believe what we are teaching them! As fathers, our task is not simply to do all we can to make sure that our children come to believe in Jesus. We are called to disciple our sons in such a way that they are prepared to disciple others. As we share what it means to be a follower of Jesus with them, we want them to learn how to do the same with their friends, fellow students and colleagues. The Gospel is too good to keep to ourselves, we need to constantly look for ways to give it away!

The best way dads can prepare their sons to share their faith is by letting their sons see them doing it. Let them hear us praying for opportunities to share the Gospel with our neighbours. Let them see us speaking naturally of Jesus and life with him in our conversations over the fence. Let them see us caring for those around us out of a desire to show Jesus. Tell them about Gospel conversations you've had at work. If our sons catch this vision, they will begin to see that they, too, are caught up in God's glorious mission to rescue people from darkness and bring them into the kingdom of the Son he loves (Col 1 :13.) They will begin to understand that Christ is appealing through them to those they- know "Be reconciled to God." (2 Car 5:20). Teach them faith is for sharing.

Teach them to expect suffering

One of the ways that we can exasperate our sons and set them up for failure is to give them the expectation that Christians have a right to a trouble-free life. We would never teach them a health and wealth gospel, yet in subtle ways we can convey the idea that God owes us a better life now (defined in human terms) because we believe in Jesus. The Bible does not teach this and, in fact, many times life becomes harder when we commit ourselves to following Jesus.

We need to teach our sons that we live in a world under the curse. This is a world where bad things happen and everybody dies. Christians too suffer bankruptcy, spend a lifetime struggling with chronic pain, lose loved ones to disease, are let down or betrayed by those we love as well as all manner of other things. To teach our kids otherwise is to prepare them for a huge crisis of faith. This world is not heaven. Many of their dreams will not come true or will be dashed, and there is nothing surer than the fact that they will share in the general suffering of men living under God's curse.

In addition to the suffering which is part of living in this world, Christians will also suffer in particular ways because of their faith. Even in the West- and more so as time passes - Christians will be persecuted for their faith and marginalized for their beliefs. The time may come when we lose our jobs and even our possessions because we belong to

Christ. Our_ sons need to know that this is not a bad thing. In fact, it is a testimony to the fact that we belong to Christ. "No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also" Un 15:20). Fathers need to teach their sons to expect suffering as part of following Jesus.

Teach them about the life to come

There is one final thing we need to teach our sons and that is a robust hope in the life to come. They need to know that Christ has come to drive back every effect of the curse and that, when he returns, the world will be made new. Those who have hoped in Christ will live on a renewed earth with renewed bodies and renewed minds. There they will receive the crown which does not fade away. There they will rule with Christ and live in perfect relationship with God in a world without suffering or sorrow or pain. As Christ passed through suffering into glory so, too, will those who have trusted in him.

Our sons need to know that this world is not their home. The battle is now, the reward is to come. If they place their hopes in this world which is passing away, they will be disappointed but if they place their hopes in the world to come, their wildest dreams won't anticipate half of what God has in store for them. The best way for them to learn these things is to see them in their fathers!

Conclusion

For better or for worse, our sons often end up emulating us - their fathers. Let us pray that God will help us to become more Christ-like - to model a faith that is bold, sacrificial, joyful and hopeful. May God help us not simply to teach our boys what following Jesus looks like but also to model for them a robust faith which is anchored in Christ's work on our behalf and looking forward to the life to come. May God also lead our sons to a life of full-blooded discipleship in which they give themselves wholeheartedly to the one who gave himself for them!

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