


TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

2018.1.7



A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

Questions for Reflection

- TCC was founded as a church for families in 1992. How has TCC impacted your family since you began attending?
- TCC's goal is to partner with families in raising godly children. From your perspective, what should that partnership look like? How have you seen that partnership function well? How can we improve? Be specific.
- Pastor Doug asked our Next Gen staff to share the greatest challenges they face in reaching children and students. What do you believe are the greatest challenges in influencing your family for Christ? How could TCC better support you as you face those challenges?
- Pastor Doug reminded us of four parenting commitments that can enhance our success as parents.
Commitment 1 - To parent successfully, you must know the goal of parenting.
Commitment 2 - To parent successfully, we must practice what we preach.
Commitment 3 - To parent successfully, parenting must be a top priority.
Commitment 4 - Build engaged, loving relationships with your children.
- Where have you seen the most growth? Where do you most need to grow?
- How could TCC better support your development as a parent?

How could TCC better support your marriage?

Need encouragement in parenting?
For free hope and help, write to:
counseling@tcc.org

Application-Challenge

- Fill out the "parenting arrow" (Strategic Parenting Plan) if you have not done so already. If you are struggling, consider asking a wise, godly couple to walk through it with you.
- Commit to praying for and/or serving in one of our family or children's ministries. Our kids and students need adults who are willing to share their time and experience!
- Help us help you! Please let us know how we can better serve you as parents, spouses, or believers! We are here to serve you and support your kids, your marriage, and your family as a whole. Contact Pastor Lanier (lward343@gmail.com) if you have any ideas, concerns, or want to help us move forward in 2018!

Take One Step: What is one small, concrete step of obedience you will put into practice this week?



Strategic Parenting Plan

Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. — Luke 2:52

Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. — Psalm 127:4



Wisdom

1. _____

2. _____

Stature

1. _____

2. _____

Outside Influences: Next 1-2 Years

1. _____

2. _____

Wisdom

Stature

Favor with God

Child's name: _____

Date: _____

Outside Influences: Next Six Months

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Favor with God

1. _____

2. _____

Favor with men

1. _____

2. _____

Psalm 78 reviews the turbulent “youth” of Israel (from its time of slavery in Egypt to the reign of King David). It is meant to search the conscience—so that history not repeat itself! At the same time, it is meant to warm the heart—for it tells of God’s great grace that persists through all Israel’s disobedience. They learned in the “school of hard knocks”—let’s us skip that painful curriculum and learn from their example!

Monday—Read Psalm 78:1-8

- According to v. 1, there’s something that the psalmist really wants his readers to heed. What are those lessons (see v. 2-3)?
- Note that these were “hidden lessons from Israel’s past” (v. 2)—but what was he committed to **not** do for the next generation (v. 4)? What are painful stories from **your** youth (such as foolish, destructive behavior), that you’ve been afraid to tell your kids? Why?
- The Psalmist is about to recount Israel’s stupid, rebellious acts—but notice how he couches them in a reminder of **God’s** faithfulness (v. 4b). How would that help his listeners choose to obey God? How would it help them not despair of their own hardness of heart?
- Notice the chain of cause and effect: God commanded the Jews to teach their children (v. 5) **so that** each successive generation would know God’s Law (v. 6), **so that** they would trust and obey God and not forget his works on their behalf (v. 7), **so that** future generations wouldn’t be disobedient and experience God’s discipline, as their forefathers had (v. 8). Notice how kind and benevolent our God is!
- When you encounter God’s commands, do you typically think, “*Look how loving and protective my Father is!*”—or do you think something else?
- Write a brief prayer of repentance, humility, trust, and teachability to your Loving Heavenly Father.

Tuesday—Read Psalm 78:9-20

- Israel’s history reveals that the tribe of Ephraim (v. 9-10) rebelled against the Lord. The tribe of Ephraim is mentioned again in v. 67 (although they were an influential tribe, God rejected them and chose the tribe of Judah (v. 68) for the privilege of fathering the Messiah).
- Ephraim “refused to walk in God’s law” (v. 10b) even though God did a bunch of miracles on their behalf (v. 11). What miracles are described in v. 12-13? (See Exodus 15:8 for the answer.) What miracles are described in v. 14-16? (See Exodus 17:6 for the answer.)
- Verse 17 begins: “Yet...” What did Israel do in spite of God’s gracious, miraculous provision? Describe a time when you did that.
- Circle the word “heart” in v. 8, 18, and 37. What does each verse say was wrong in them at a heart-level? How do we do the same?

Wednesday—Read Psalm 78:21-33

- Israel “did not believe in God or trust in his salvation” (v. 22). According to v. 21, how did God respond to Israel’s unbelief? (See Numbers 11:1-23, 31-34 for the shocking story!) Why does God take it personally when we refuse to believe that he’s trustworthy and loving?
- God was angry and killed a bunch of them (v. 21)—so, does he give up on them forever? What do v. 23-29 say? Is God a “push over”?
- So, God disciplined them again (more graves! see v. 30-31). Surely now they’d learned their lesson?! Ummm, read v. 32!
- But now, surely they’ve reformed—right? Nope. See v. 33.
- But surely **we’re** more faithful than they were...right?! Are we?

Thursday—Read Psalm 78:34-41

This summary passage could be labeled “Fickleness and Faithfulness”! Notice the following literary devices:

- “When...then...” (v. 34)
- “They sought him...” (v. 34) ...“but they deceived him” (v. 36)
- “But they” (v. 36) compared with “But He” (v. 38)
- “Often He restrained...” (v. 38b) but “How often they rebelled...” (v. 40)
- Verse 37 gives the explanation for **why** they kept on returning to their evil. (Read how poetically 2 Peter 2:22 portrays this!)

According to v. 40-41, **how** did their acts of unfaithfulness and rebellion impact God **emotionally**?

How does **our** unfaithfulness and rebellion impact God emotionally? Read Ephesians 4:30.

Friday—Read Psalm 78:42-64

- Make a list of **man’s** actions and a list of **God’s** actions. What do you observe?
- In v. 61-64, notice the eight descriptions he gives to the people of Israel (two per verse). Circle the word “his” and the word which follows (eg. his strength in v. 61a). List all the ways he describes **us**. Notice how **relational** God is. He is **not** uninterested or disengaged! **Which one** of those descriptors is most surprising to you—and **why**? What do those descriptors reveal about God’s character?
- God seems to be quiet for a while (eg. v. 42-57),
- God keeps on forgiving and intervening for people; is he a “**push-over**” or an “**enabler**”? How do we explain his patience and love?

Saturday—Read Psalm 78:65-72

- Imagine you’d read this whole psalm which chronicles Israel’s unfaithfulness, and then you come to v. 65: “*Then the Lord awoke as if from sleep, like a warrior overcome by wine, and he...*” How would **you** have expected that sentence to continue? Would it have been:
 - ☐ “...and God said, ‘I’m sick of you! Now you’re really gonna get it!’ “
 - ☐ “...and God took good care of them and protected them from their enemies.”How do you think you would have responded if you were God? What does that tell you about yourself? What does God’s actual response tell you about him? What does it tell you about our destiny, as his rather difficult children?
- Notice the specifics of **how** God provided for his people: by selecting a godly leader for them (v. 67-68, 70-71). How do you see this same principle in action today in the church? (See Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-7; Hebrews 13:17)
- David possessed **two** qualities that helped him “shepherd” the nation of Israel. What were they (v. 72)? What does “integrity of heart” look like? What are some evidences that you do or don’t have it? What does it take to develop it? What do “skillful hands” look like? What are some evidences that you do or don’t have them? What does it take to develop them?
- Thinking back over Israel’s dismal “track record”, how does the provision of skillful, virtuous leaders help? But does having skillful, virtuous leaders **guarantee** that the followers will be faithful? Why or why not?
- So, thinking back to the goal of this recitation of Israel’s history (see v. 6-8)—what should TCC do to try to raise up a faithful generation? Although, as we’ve seen, there are no guarantees that children will follow God, what elements must be in TCC’s plan of action?