

## Family – God’s Primary Shield – Pt2

### 5. Esteem

#### Genesis 1:27

**So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.**

When we have a revelation of this it affects how we speak to each other. We will reinforce this belief through our words. This is a sense of worth and dignity, the feeling that you are significant. “I matter”. Listen to your children, stop finishing off their sentences and brushing them off. Be fully present in the conversations you are having and teach your children to learn to do the same. When one of my children interrupts the other, I make a point of telling the interrupter that his brother was not finished making his point. By doing so, I hope to show my children that they are all important in our house. A few years ago I counselled a young girl who was extremely shy. After a few sessions I realised that it was actually the mother’s behaviour causing the shyness. When asked a question, her mother constantly interrupted as if the little girl’s answer wasn’t good enough. Eventually the child became lazy and allowed her mom to continue to violate those boundaries by responding for her. Esteem is very important.

A sense of security increases when there is HOPE. Family is a place where hope is instilled.

**Jeremiah 29:11: For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.**

**Sadly in many families people grow us with a sense of doom. They are told how they will never make it. This is so different to what Jesus says about us and our abilities.**

#### John 14:12

**Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.**

**Psalms 139:16 You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.**

Self-esteem has 6 dimensions

Significance, self acceptance, security, self-efficacy, self-respect, and self-worth.

### 6. Understanding

#### 2 Cor 6:11-13

**We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and opened wide our hearts to you. 12 We are not withholding our affection from you, but you are withholding yours from us. 13 As a fair exchange—I speak as to my children—open wide your hearts also.**

Be willing to make yourself vulnerable. It’s easier to do this if you have learn to express affection in your family setting.

#### Romans 12:15

**Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.**

## New Living Translation

### **Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep.**

God wants us to be so connected that we can identify with each other at an emotional level. Its not nice when you are so happy about something but your loved ones don't share in the excitement.

Judgement is suspended. Love hopes all things. In other words it believes the best about someone. We choose to trust each other instead of being suspicious. One of the warmest feelings is knowing that you are trusted. "Honey I know you will make a wise choice." You have the right to make mistakes and learn from them. Your mistakes don't result in banishment. Breaking something in the house isn't a catastrophe, it is a mistake. The gravity of discipline should never be related to the value of the thing destroyed. Experience empathy for and from others. The word "empathy" comes from two Latin words meaning "feeling into".

Empathy is the capacity to understand or feel what another person is experiencing from within their frame of reference. It is the capacity to place oneself in another's position. You are allowed to make mistakes.

*There are 3 major types of empathy:*

- a. Emotional Empathy – "I feel you". This is the capacity to respond to another's mental state with an appropriate emotion.
- b. Cognitive Empathy – "I get you- I might not agree with you, but I get you". The ability to see where another person is coming from.
- c. Empathic Concern – "I am here for you". This involves being there for people when they need practical assistance. Some time ago my wife was not feeling well so I told her that I would take care of the kids and also sort out our dinner. I was quite proud of myself as the helpful husband. Later on that evening she communicated that she did not know whether I really understood how bad she was feeling.

She went on to describe the nature of her ailment and the pain it was causing. Of course I got defensive and stated how I obviously understood how she was feeling otherwise I wouldn't be doing all the chores. Fortunately because I understood the different types of empathy I realised that she needed emotional empathy whilst I was only showing her empathic concern. Developing these skills requires relational maturity. Struggling with that relational maturity can affect every intimate relationship and people from dysfunctional backgrounds often end up very detached. Understanding is important to prevent the enemy from creating massive gaps between us.

## **7. Recreation**

You can have fun. You can be a child. You can laugh freely. You don't have to take yourself seriously all the time. In many families authority can bring about the feeling that one cannot express themselves by being humorous or by telling jokes. This can transfer into the real world and prevent people who haven't grown up in a relaxed environment from feeling comfortable in their workplace especially when faced with a CEO, MD or other authority figure. It is important not to reject the people who are trying to mentor you because you have been rejected in the past. Relax, recreation is important.

### **1 Tim 6:17**

**Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.**

## **8. Age appropriateness**

## **1 Cor 13:11**

**When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.**

Developmental stages need to be respected. Children should behave like children. In many families, irresponsible parents force their children to grow up too quickly. When children have to look after themselves and their siblings, emotional development is hindered and those children can become too serious. Adult responsibilities shouldn't be placed on children to cope with.

## **9. Healthy Discipline**

### **Prov 3:11-12**

**My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline, and do not resent his rebuke, 12 because the Lord disciplines those He loves, as a father the son he delights in.**

The word discipline means to train or teach and this should be evident from the approach we have to disciplining our children. The type of discipline needs to be appropriate for the misdemeanour. At the same time misbehavior needs to be dealt with. Some parents are inclined not to set boundaries for their children because they don't want their children to grow up with strict parents, like they may have experienced. Having the resultant approach that....would be termed 'compensation parenting' You, as the parent, are compensating for the childhood you had. Try to look at the way you are parenting and ask yourself if anything you do is a reaction to how you were parented.

## **10. Spirituality**

You are allowed to develop your relationship with God without being ridiculed or shamed. Growing up in a healthy environment helps us cope with life as adults.

### **2 Tim 3:13-15**

**3 while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.**

The other day I was desperately crying out to God for my kids to connect with Him.

### **Proverbs 22:6**

**Train up a child in the way he should go; Even when he is old he will not depart from it.**

**Our homes should be ministry centres for our children.**

### **Deuteronomy 6:6-7**

**And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.**

Get your kids to fall in love with their bibles. Buy them good age appropriate bibles. New International Version is good.