

Breaking Bad

"Parenting Fail"

**Luke 2:41-52; Exodus 20:12; Psalm 111:10
(September 24-30, 2017)**

In Dr. Seuss' popular book *The Cat in the Hat*, young Sally and Sam's Mother leaves them alone for a while. While bored on a rainy day, the young kids are tempted by an exciting stranger. As the Cat in the Hat approaches their house, he reassures the kids their Mom won't mind if he comes in to play. The Cat looks fun and acts fun. "I know it is wet and the sun is not sunny, but we can have lots of good fun that is funny," the Cat tells them. The young kids let him in, but the Cat makes poor decisions, tries to play with too many things at once and creates a big mess. When Thing 1 and Thing 2 arrive, matters go from bad to worse as they fly kites in the house and knock everything over. Thankfully the young boy Sam takes a stand. "I do NOT like the way that they play! If Mother could see this, oh what she would say."

When you were young and away from your parents, would you have let the Cat in? As parents, we want to help our children mature and have the wisdom to take a stand before things become messy. In other words, as the Cat said, "It is fun to have fun, but you have to know how."

Answer and discuss the following question with your group.

1. Share a time when either you or your parent's had a #parentingfail? Or How have one of your children made a good decision that made you proud?

Read the following excerpt out loud or watch message segment #1.

An excerpt from the StoneBridge message, "Parenting Fail".

The law required every adult male Jew who lived within 15 miles of Jerusalem to attend Passover. Mary and Joseph were 90 miles away. This would have been a big deal. Still to this day the goal for every Jew all over the world is to attend once in their lifetime, to celebrate in Jerusalem the Passover feast. The celebration would last seven days. It really was the most important celebration you could go to. It has a happy time filled with hugs and singing.

God was indeed good. He was a deliverer and I am sure that at every camp fire there were conversations and prayers that again God would deliver the nation from Rome, a Messiah would come who would save the people.

After seven days Mary and Joseph and Jesus are heading home. The way travel would have worked was that these families that had come from Nazareth would have traveled in a caravan. It was for protection and fellowship. Women and children would go first. The men and young boys would follow. They would meet up at the end of the day to set up camp.

At the end of the day Mary and Joseph find each other, but Jesus is not at their camp. Maybe he is with his friends. No one has seen him all day. Mary thought he had been

with Joseph. Joseph thought that he had been with Mary. He was just at the age where he could have been with either group. It was an honest mistake, but Jesus was lost.

Read Luke 2:41-50 and answer/discuss the following questions.

2. As set forth in Luke 2:41-42, Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem and the Passover festival "every year" and, when Jesus was twelve, attended the festival "as usual." Based on these verses and the message excerpt above, explain the spiritual culture instilled into Jesus' home by his parents.
3. What "parenting fail" did Jesus' parents make during the Passover festival? What was the emotional state of Jesus' parent during this event? Do you think this was an honest mistake by good parents, bad parenting, or a possible case for child protective services? How come?
4. This is the only glimpse of Jesus between his infancy and his adulthood. What does this passage reveal about Jesus' identity and his mission.

Read the following excerpt out loud or watch message segment #2.

An excerpt from the StoneBridge message, "Parenting Fail".

Many of us have lived our lives without wisdom. The choices that we have made with our money have been foolish. The choices that we made with regard to relationships have been stupid. Have you ever said this, "How could I have been so stupid. I can't believe I did that. If only I would have listened."

Parents, part of our responsibility is to teach the wisdom of God to our kids. The primary way that kids learn about God is through their parents. StoneBridge loves to teach kids God's Word. We will do our best to do that in creative ways, but we know that partnering with parents will truly help them in the area of wisdom.

We don't want our kids to learn the hard way. We want them to avoid the lessons that we learned by being foolish. "Well I don't care what God says about money, I can figure this out." OK. "I don't care what God has to say about sex, I can figure this out." "I don't care what God says about being healthy, I got this." Then we are choosing to ignore the wisdom of God.

Read Luke 2:51-52, Exodus 20:12 and Psalm 111:10 and answer/discuss the following questions.

5. What were the different ways in which Jesus matured? How does Luke 2:51-52 reflect the truth of the fifth commandment in Exodus 20:12 and the promise of this commandment?

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6. Given that "Fear of the Lord" refers to revering God and honoring his commands, What is the difference between living with a knowledge of God and fearing God? Based on Psalm 111:10, what is the result of fearing God?

Reflection and Wrap-up

7. When it comes to matters of faith, what is the culture in your family and your priorities? How can modeling a right relationship with God as a parent can lead to faith being "caught more than it is taught."
8. Parents sometimes make mistakes. Explain how the passages in this lesson can help you not only recover from your mistakes, but also encourage you to teach your children the benefits of revering God and obeying his commands.

Pray Together as a Group

Additional Study

If you have time during your Small Group or you want to study more about helping your children mature in faith, read and consider the following passages:

- Proverbs 9:10
- Deuteronomy 10:12
- James 1:19
- Philippians 2:14
- Luke 11:4
- Galatians 6:9
- 1Thessalonians 5:11
- Matthew 6:24