

Gracefully Letting Go - Class Notes:

by Dara Halydier

God gave them to us as babies so that we would love them if he'd given them to us as teenagers we would've given them back!

5 boys that have flown the coop. All different/different families – no formula

Three parts of letting go first of all preparing our kids, second of all preparing our teenagers, and lastly preparing ourselves

1. raise independent kids they depend upon God
 - a. they are not yours to meet your needs – get your needs met through God, spouse, others – not kids – they are not a trophy
 - b. Don't try to relive your childhood through your kids – this is their story (Lucy)
 - c. give them back to God – realize that you have stewardship not ownership partner with God- He lent them to us for awhile –Abraham and Isaac
 - d. teach life skills all along don't wait until last year – next step, not a leap
 - i. emotional skills
 - ii. practical skills - each birthday give responsibility/privilege- work ethic
 - iii. social skills – making friends, modesty, not interrupting, etc... Never say, “Because I told you so.” – clear expectations
 - e. teach Bible skills – relationship – 2/3 of church kids walk away when they are grown
 - f. spend time with 10,11,12 year olds talking and playing now so they will relate with you later
 - g. model marriages – Dobson says that the most important relationship for any child

2. teenagers
 - a. no longer in the grammar stage or logic stage that need to move them into the rhetorical or application stage this means to ask questions rather than lecture. Open ended questions – best, worst, funniest, etc... Never ask a boy about feelings!
 - b. Hebrews 5:14 but solid food is for the mature who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. – point it out/ role play
 - i. Home is a safe place to practice
 - ii. Let them fail. Discuss how they could have done things differently –learn from mistakes and talk and strategize
 - iii. Love them - Psalms 37:23 through 24 the steps of the man are established by the Lord, and he delights in his way. When he falls, he will not be hurled headlong, because the Lord is the one who holds his hand.
 - c. Dr. Henry cloud and Dr. John Townsend their book raising great kids
 - i. some things are dangerous; stay away from them, or you will die
 - ii. some things are not wise; do not do them, or you will lose
 - iii. some things are not moral; avoid them and you will win



- iv. you are in charge of all of the above until you prove that you cannot be, and then we or the law will intervene
- d. moving boundaries/building trust
 - i. clear expectations - contract
 - ii. consistency (curfews)
 - iii. with each step outward there comes a building of trust
 - iv. not age 18 and "be gone"!
- e. process – don't need to depend on mom and dad, depend on God – trust track record that starts when they are younger
- f. God is writing their story – step back and assist, give advice, then give God room
 - i. Think back to your emancipation – good or bad example, but your desires and inner struggles
 - ii. Don't control
- g. Train up a child Prov. 22:6 – Let them be who God created them to be not who you want them to be
- h. Moms and dads need to be ministers of grace:
Define grace – what does grace look like for a parent of a teenager – curfews, burning the rug in front of the fireplace.
Were you given grace when you were growing up? (See the Grace Awakening p.215 for chart comparing shame based spirituality and healthy spirituality) Can't give what you don't have. Go to God and learn His grace.
 - i. Are the people you serve given the freedom to be who they are, or you do you force them to be who you expect them to be?
 - ii. Do let others go, or do you smother them or control them?
 - iii. Would folks feel intimidated or relieved in your presence?
 - iv. Are you cultivating spontaneous, creative celebrants or fearful captives?
 - v. Do you encourage, build up, and affirm those to whom you minister?
- i. let go of child's past – allow him to be "becoming"
- j. it's your move child –
 - i. If you don't let them control their own destinies then you become an enabler – an enabler keeps the child weak and doesn't allow them to grow strong (a tree)
 - ii. My prayer when spelunking – Give them adventure and danger to form them but give them wisdom to keep them safe.
- k. know that you can do everything right and things can still go wrong!
 - i. speculations (If only,,, What if) 2 corinthians10:5
 - ii. BUT GOD... Their choices are no longer a reflection upon your parenting.
- M. Dara's 10 steps to letting go
 1. Pray
 2. know that their foundation is firm



3. Know that their father God loves them even more than you and has a purpose and a plan for them
 4. Pray
 5. Endure through the fire with them – be there
 6. Celebrate victories
 7. Ask questions – even the uncomfortable ones
 8. Discuss everything
 9. Pray
 10. Begin to let them go emotionally – they are no longer your responsibility and God is big enough to handle them - Read Letting God – Grace Awakening by Charles Swindoll p.137
2. Preparing yourself
- A. Empty nest – mourning/dreaming
 - B. Marriage – top priority
 - C. Needs met outside of child – parent relationship
 - D. Have goals (my struggle) – try volunteering to find new passion – be a mentor
 - E. God is not finished with you yet – continue to grow and practice your walk with the Lord

