

0 (1s):

All right. So today in this update required series, we are talking about parenting today, parenting. So if you are a parent or a grandparent, this messages for you, if you are someday maybe going to be a parent, this is for you. If you're not a parent, this is for you because you can pray for the rest of us. Okay. Gives you insight of how to pray. Yes. Thank you. Parenting parenting has changed so much, so much over the years and over the last 10 years, there's been drastic changes. That's why we're talking about update required for a parenting. My grandpa shared, he passed away recently. I'm headed out to California this Saturday for his funeral. Gonna fly there and fly back in one day. So I can hopefully be back for you guys today. Pray for me.

0 (42s):

But I remember talking with my grandpa. He was born in 1933. So he grew up in the great depression. And I remember him telling stories about being a kid and just doing whatever he wanted. Right? So his parents both had to work to make it through that tough time. So he in 19, in the 1930s, early 1940s, he lived in Manchester, New Hampshire. He and his brother would often jump on the trains, ride with the hobos. Cause there's a lot of hobos back in those days, ride all the way up to Maine or all the way down to Boston and then come back. And as long as they were home for supper, nobody cared. Right? Didn't know that was going on, but that's what kids did back in those days, kids and teenagers, they did what they wanted, you know, free range parenting.

0 (1m 23s):

If you've heard the term right now, that's a lot different than parenting today. Isn't it? When kids never leave their parents' site, I don't know if you heard about this back in 2017 here in our neighborhood in central park, there was a story. It made national news because it a couple had their four and a half year old daughter who was playing in one of the pocket parks in our neighborhood. And they put the four year and a half year old and she was playing in the park. There was other kids, other parents there, other adults. So the moms sat on the porch and watch for a little while and then went inside to do a few chores and watched out the windows. So four and a half year old daughter was playing in the park. One of the other adults there saw this called CPS to report neglect or abuse, right?

0 (2m 6s):

And they came and they investigated and they ended up charging this family with a crime of abuse. It's happened in 2017. And my, how things have changed at aren't that right? Four and a half year old, can't be out in the park within even eyesight of the parents. I'm saying all this because kids today, kids stay live in the safest world that has ever existed. Kids have never been more physically safe than they are today. It's really true. If you look at the statistics that kids today are the least likely to get into a fight, they're the least likely to get killed.

0 (2m 47s):

They have less car accidents, even when they start driving yet, they are the most anxious, anxious generation ever. The highest level of depression ever, the most loneliness and the highest rates of suicide in

history. So what we see from this, and what we're going to talk about today is that our kids have never been physically safer than they are today. And yet they have never been less emotionally, spiritually, and mentally safe than they are today. That's that's the world we live in. And I'm saying this because I mean, we can, we can debate about it. Okay. But whether it's over-protective, but it's a good thing that our kids aren't getting into fights and dying, right?

0 (3m 30s):

It's a good thing that we have car seats that are like tanks, right? It's a good thing that TVs aren't falling on top of kids' heads anymore. Right? These are good things. So I'm not saying anything about the physical safety, but what I am saying is that we need to do a better job when it comes to the emotional, spiritual, and mental health of our kids and teens, we are failing and update is required. So that's what we're going to talk about today. So I want to talk a little bit about the scenario that we're living in today, so that when we do turn to God's word here in a minute, and we're going to focus on one verse that really look at a whole bunch of other scriptures is that we're ready to apply God's word today because God's word is timeless and it's very timely.

0 (4m 14s):

And even though things have drastically changed over the last 10 years, God's word still applies and we just need to update how we're applying it to our lives today. So let me give you some statistics about why things are so different today. So here's the thing in 2009, half of 12th graders, seniors in high school were on social media every day by 2017. It was 85%. So almost all kids are on every single day in 2011, 50 2% of kids. So this is younger than eight, had a device in their home that they could use 52% by 2017. That number was 85% of eight year olds and younger headed device to use in the home in 2011.

0 (4m 57s):

I'm sorry, from 2013 to 2017 mobile media time for kids eight and under has tripled has tripled. And part of this, what makes it different is that social media has changed. So I got on social media right in the mid two thousands and has changed drastically in 2009. Facebook added the like button, same thing on Instagram, Twitter added the retweet. They also started developing algorithms to give people more of what they were looking at in light, which has led to many, many problems. It's difficult, especially for younger kids, younger teenagers, to deal with seeing everything that's going on around them.

0 (5m 41s):

There's a phrase that's used in some literature called compare and despair compared to where they see other people's glamorous lives. And they think, wow, I wish my life was like that. At least to jealousy, anger, and hatred and depression. So there's a whole bunch of studies. I'm going to talk about a few of them later, but they are finding that people who are on screens or on social media, this is kids and teenagers self-reporting is that when they use those devices, they are less happy. They report it themselves. I'm not as happy when I use my device. You get when they're not on their device and doing other activities, they're

happier. Self-reporting part of the reason is the jealousy and comparison.

0 (6m 25s):

Another big problem is cyber bullying. Younger teenagers really face this the most. And according to statistics, one out of three teens reports being cyber bullied by another person. This has led physically to increased obesity, sleep deprivation, attention problems, and also some mental, mental issues, anxiety, depression, delayed speech, and the delayed ability to read motor issues and even ice damage depressive symptoms are at an all time high people who report feeling depressed. That number has increased by 95% over the last decade.

0 (7m 8s):

Clinical depression has doubled for the first time ever in 2016, students entering into college reported that their mental health was below average. Some of the majority of people have below average mental health going into college. And if you're thinking well, you know, is it just because people are talking about mental health more we'll know, cause it's actually leading to physical things that now one in five teen girls is cutting or injuring themselves that 46% more teens killed themselves in 2015 than in 2007, the statistics are pretty bleak. And I want to show you a few drafts. So you can visualize this a couple of which I showed in the first message in the series, but we can look at them again.

0 (7m 51s):

In this first chart, we see the rise of teen depression for 12 to 17 year olds over the past few years, starting in 2004 was for you guys. So from 2004 to 2018, when, when a lot of these last statistics were available, you can see for females at the top, which have been the category that has struggled the most, that depression has increased 21.5% over that time period. And for boys 7.7%, let's look at this next one. It's not just depression, loneliness. This is a chart of loneliness and its growth in percentage over the years. And as you can see in 2011, when a lot of these changes were first starting to happen, that's when loneliness has reached a higher level and this stopped at about 2018 as well, but it's now over 30% of teens and those different colors are different countries.

0 (8m 43s):

So this is not just the United States. This is around the world. As kids and teenagers are dealing with their devices and trying to figure out they're lonely, even though they're more connected than ever before. Let's look at the next chart. This is perhaps the most discouraging. This is teenage girls, suicide rates. And as you can see, it says 2009, that white line where social media became available on mobile devices. You can see things starting to go up right then that among teenage girls, age 18 or 15 to 19, there has been a 70% increase in suicide rates. And for girls age 10 to 14, 151% increase in suicide rates. This is a really big problem that we've got to talk about because kids' lives.

0 (9m 27s):

Today is so much different than what we as parents experience. I mean, I'm a young parent it's totally different now than it was 2009, 2010, 2011. Everything changed for our kids. So that's why we look around and we see people doing all sorts of stuff, but nobody knows what they're doing. And I'm saying this because a lot of us are taking our cues and how to parent from other parents or from how we were parented. We need an update to figure out how to deal with devices, social media, and the digital age our kids are growing up in today. Right? You guys with me on that? So that's what we're going to talk about. We're going to look at God's word to get some wisdom for today and how we can be ready for that.

0 (10m 10s):

So what we're going to learn today is a simple idea, because a lot of you are already thinking, Matt, you're just, fear-mongering, you know, you're just trying to get us afraid, but that's actually the opposite of what I'm trying to do. Our big idea today that we'll learn from God's word is that the fear of the Lord for parents is good. Parents have nothing to fear when they fear the word, okay, you guys got that. This is our big idea today. Parents have nothing to fear when they fear the Lord. So we're going to talk about what is the fear of the Lord? Why is that a very good thing? And then we're going to talk about two things that it is not today. We're going to see two ways that fear the Lord. We get it wrong. That's not fear the Lord. And then we're going to talk about how the fear of the Lord actually can be applied today to our parenting.

0 (10m 54s):

Got that. So the first thing we're going to do is look at our main verse that we draw this passage from this, this big idea. And it comes in Proverbs 20, I'm sorry, Proverbs 14, 26. So Proverbs 14, 26. If you have your Bible, you can use the YouVersion Bible app as well. If you find the rice church Denver event, you can look at all the scriptures that we're going to be looking at today. So in Proverbs 14, verse 26, we read whoever fears. The Lord has a secure fortress. Doesn't that sound good? And for their children, it will be a refuge. Whoever fears. The Lord has a secure fortress and for their children, it will be a refuge.

0 (11m 38s):

I like that word fortress don't you, we all want a force. Batman had a fortress. We want a fortress. So here's, here's the thing I know parents today are over-protective right. We want to protect our kids. We want to keep them safe. That's good. We need to take that and apply it now to their mental and spiritual health. And if we want to do that, if we want a secure fortress, not just for ourselves, but for our kids, as this verse tells us, we need to learn to fear. The Lord, that that phrase secure fortress in the Hebrews is, is two words together. Sometimes it's translated as like secure confidence that there are two words, meaning confidence. But when they're put back to back like this, it's talking about something like a fortress.

0 (12m 18s):

Like you can imagine a big castle up on a hill, high walls, high towers. You've got to see the whole area when anybody's coming up to this hill, that the fortress is on top of. You can see all the enemies when they're coming to attack and you're prepared to defend against all that comes against you. This is the kind of

fortress that God wants us to have for our families. And that's why the title of my message today is a fortress for your family. How can we build that? Fortress? Because as it says in the second line and for their children, it will be a refuge. Our children will resecure. Our children will be protected if we, as parents have the fear of the Lord. Interesting. Right? So what is the fear of award?

0 (12m 60s):

Now, if you're here two weeks ago, you might be scratching your head because you're like Matt, you preach the whole message called how to defeat fear that God is a God of love, not a God that we need to cower before and be afraid that he's going to hurt us. Okay. He loves us. God is love. And, and you're right. Hey, that fear is a different type of fear that the fear of the Lord is. I think it's a phrase, fear of the Lord and you see it again and again in the Bible, this fear of the Lord is a reverence for God. I just want you to think about is, imagine if you were standing before God, this is a God who with one word spoke and the universe leapt into existence, that galaxies were formed. That black holes emerged with one word.

0 (13m 42s):

He created you. If you're standing before that, God, won't you be a little bit nervous. You'd walk in respect. You know, I feel this way the other day, actually just yesterday, I was out with my son Canaan and there was a police officer that came into our neighborhood. I'm not quite sure what he was doing, but a police officer with a gun, you show some respect to, right? This guy has got some power and this is just a human being. Have any of you stood before a judge before you don't have to raise your hands. When you stand before a judge, there's a level of respect and honor and fear that you have because this person has a lot of power.

0 (14m 22s):

That's why we call them. You're on, there's a reverence. And this is just a human being who has limited power, but the God of the universe who created all things. If we stand before him, you better believe we're going to have fear. Now he loves us. He cares about us. He has accepted us. He's forgiven us. And yet still we know he's got a lot of power and we're glad he's on our side. And so that's the fear of the Lord. And if that's something you have in your life, the fear of the Lord, it's going to have a lot of implications for your life. It's going to change how you live. Because if God created me, if God created the universe, if God has told us how to live in his word, God has got an, I am not.

0 (15m 4s):

I should probably listen to him. I should probably change some things about my life. I should probably go and worship him with his people. Once a week, I should obey his word. When he tells me not to do something, I should do my darnedest not to do it. And when I have sinned, I need to go to him and ask for forgiveness. I'm going to change my entire life. And if we, as parents have that fear of life, the Lord is going to drastically change our lives. But it tells us in this verse that it not only changes our lives, but it actually impacts our kids as well. There's a great book called revolutionary parenting. Barna did a big study on, on what kids. They looked at, kids who had grown up. They didn't leave the faith.

0 (15m 44s):

When they were older, that they were strong, that they had resilience in their life. And the number one thing they found for those kids. Why did those kids stay with the faith? Why, why did those kids strong and firm in their lives? The one thing that parents did, the number one thing was that they, they modeled following Jesus. They didn't just talk about Jesus. They didn't even just go to church, but they showed by their lives that they love Jesus, because it changes so much. So much of your parenting more is caught than taught. Let's be honest. They watch you. Not just when you, you, you speak the right words and don't say those course jokes at a church, but they hear you at home.

0 (16m 27s):

They see how that you live. They see whether you value, worshiping God on Sundays or choose other stuff because we're busy and there's fun stuff to do in Colorado. They look at your lives and they catch way more and it's taught to them. And that impacts kids so much. But I think it's even more than this. It's interesting in the scriptures, it tells us that kids generations are impacted by how parents live. I want to show you in a couple of places in Psalm 103, it says, but from everlasting to everlasting, the Lord's love is with those who fear him and his righteousness with their children's children. This extends to grandchildren. The fear of the Lord, walking with Jesus impacts generations to come like, have you ever thought, oh, what would grandma think of me?

0 (17m 15s):

What? Grandpa thing me, it impacts generations. There's even some powerful spiritual force that happens in this as well. I want to show you this from the new Testament in first Corinthians seven 14, this fascinating. Paul writes your husband or wife, who isn't a follower of Jesus is made holy by having you as a mate. Interesting. Right? If you are a follower of Jesus, your spouse is not. You're going to impact them. This also makes your children holy and keeps them from being unclean in God's sight. Now I'm going to be honest. I don't understand this verse completely. I don't, but yet there's something about being in the vicinity of a believer and how much more in the vicinity of a believer is is their family, their spouse, their kids, that holiness almost like rubs up, rubs off that as there's a light shining into a family, that light is going to penetrate into the darkness, even of a family.

0 (18m 9s):

And it impacts kids. It impacts generations. When one person in a family decides to follow Jesus. So our fear of the Lord parents makes a secure fortress for our kids. You want to protect your kids. If you want that big fortress up on a hill, fear the Lord above all things, fear the Lord fear. The Lord makes a fortress for your family. And that's why parents have nothing to fear when they fear the Lord. So I told you that there's going to be two things that we're going to learn, that the fear of the Lord is not okay. You guys with me. So two things that the fear of the Lord is not. I want you guys to get this. The first thing that the fear of the Lord is not, is it, it's not the fear of man.

0 (18m 54s):

The fear of man. I want to show you this from another proverb, Proverbs 29, 25 says, fear of man is a dangerous trap. It's the exact opposite of a secure fortress looks like it's going to be good. It's a trap. It's a snare. It's a trap. But to trust in God means safety. Okay? So what is fear of man? I use this version of it. Some, some versions say fear of people, but I think it's kind of like a phrase, just like fear of the Lord. His fear of man means looking at other people and being afraid of what they're going to think of you, how they're going to judge me. Well, can I do that right now as a parent? I think that a lot of parents are extremely influenced by other parents around them.

0 (19m 37s):

If other parents will allow their kids to do that, should I do that? Sometimes it's our own parents. Like what my parents think, right? We're afraid of what other people would think about our parenting style. But as I've shown, parents don't know what they're doing anymore. Maybe they never knew. Right? All of us are figuring out for the first time. Aren't we? Right. And it's completely different than when we were raised. If we even remember how our parents did things, no parents know what they're doing. Do you know how I know this? Let me tell you what happened this week. We were in Moab, Utah on vacation, and we took the family to a rock shop. As you do in my library, went to the rock shop. I'd never been there and there's cool rocks everywhere, you know? And there was one little boy, I think he was three, three and a half, somewhere around there.

0 (20m 20s):

And he was getting his geocode broken open, you know? So you can see what's cool inside the rock. And his mom was there and his other little brother and McKinley was watching just a couple of feet away. Just watching all this. The parents were there that the kids mom was right there. And this little three and a half year old boy walks up to McKinley. Who's four and a half sucker punches her in the stomach. He's three and a half. He's not an MMA fighter. So it wasn't like physical, but we were like, what the heck? I was a little bit distant. Melissa immediately picked up McKinley and was like, are you okay? You know, everything. All right. She was in shock just as much as the rest of her car. But do you know what that kid's mom did nothing. Few minutes, a few seconds later. She's like, oh, keep your hands to yourself.

0 (21m 2s):

That's a salt in my book. Right. Do you know what was going through my head? Because I was judging this mom, right? That's what we do. We judge each other, you know, I was thinking, if you don't discipline your child, now the prison guard will later. Right? This is what I was thinking. Okay. Because this is the reality. If parents, if we don't discipline our kids and I'm not just talking, like you got to spank them, okay? Discipline is setting. Parameters is saying, this is right. This is wrong. This is how we're going to do things in our family. Whatever the punishment is. That's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about disciplining your children. If you don't discipline your children, they will be disciplined. They will fail school. They will lose the job. They

will end the relationship or there'll be in prison. Okay. Somebody will discipline your child.

0 (21m 43s):

If you don't do it. And most parents around us have no idea what they're doing. I'm a millennial. And I know that millennials have a bad rap as parents. And I'm saying this because we're going to watch it a little video. This is a comedian. His name is miles. And he shows us what a millennial mom is like in today. So let's just watch this quick.

1 (22m 4s):

This is how you guys been. You switched over to regular milk for the kids. Wow. Yeah, we don't do that. I actually read that milk gives you strong bones and kind of makes you competitive in sports. So we stay away from that stuff. No, we do not watch TV in this household. Just rots kids' brains. What's that? Kyson no, not yet. Here. Go play with your iPad. Mommy's got a post on Instagram. It is about time. They changed the grading scale. Edelman F to a w he wasn't failing. He was just working on it. Yeah. We don't let our kids play with that family over there. He keeps score when they play sports. No, we do not use a baby monitor. Do you know how much stuff can happen from when I see something on the monitor till I actually make it to the room, he needs to be in my sight at all times. He actually still sleeps in our room, in our bed, in between us.

1 (22m 45s):

I'll show you what I've been eating. It's got the pantry here. We have the hydrated, kale, organic applesauce and goat milk. Oh, for sunburns. No. Did you know? What's in sunscreen almost died. When I found out mom, I need you to get over here right now. I can not get Kyson to behave. I sat him down, asked him how he wanted to be disciplined. That didn't work. I even gave him the smaller iPad. I've literally tried it all. How did you get us to listen? Oh my gosh, you spanked us. No, I have to go to therapy.

0 (23m 16s):

Yeah. Isn't that the truth? Right? Okay. We laugh, but parents don't know what they're doing. So to learn from them and be afraid of what other parents are doing like and what they're thinking about. They will think things about you. They will judge you, but we're going to choose the fear of the Lord over the fear of man. Right? And I think the fear of the man goes a second way when it comes to parenting. I think a lot of parents are afraid of their kids, right? They're afraid, oh my kids, aren't going to like this. What are they going to think? I want to be the cool mom. I want to be the cool dad. I want to be their friend. We're afraid of what our kids think about us. And that's fear of man. We can't do it because it's a trap.

0 (23m 56s):

If we give our kids everything they want, what we're, we're reaping the fruit of that right now with the levels of depression and loneliness and suicide at all time, highs, kids don't know. We're the parents, parents, God has given you a responsibility. God has chosen you to parent these kids to no one else is going to do it. So we've got to step up and choose the fear of the Lord over the fear of man. So fear of the man. That's, that's

not what it is. I have a question for you guys. Actually. I want to do a little poll because we're talking about the digital age now.

0 (24m 39s):

So, so we're taking this. So how does this apply to smartphones? To social media, iPads, all that stuff. I want to just ask you guys, raise your hand. If you would give your 11 year old, a stack of Playboys. No, no one. How about if someone sent a picture of their genitalia in the mail, you would take it and give it to your kids. Anybody. How about if someone was trying to recruit them for jihad, would you invite them into the home and say, Hey, why don't you hang out in my kid's bedroom all night, talk for hours. What'd you do that? Anybody yet? When we give kids smartphones, they have access to this.

0 (25m 19s):

And I don't even think it's intentional. Kids are curious. Sometimes it's accidental. Someone sends them something. Let me tell you the statistics. 40% of children have either sent or received a sext by the age of 13. That the average age of first porn viewing is at 11 years old. Today, average and 10% are addicted. By the age of 13, we're going to talk about sex and sexuality next week, come back. It's gonna be great, right? It's going to be important. We need to hear it. We need an update. YouTube. If you've seen some of the stuff on YouTube, kids just watch it. Even YouTube kids, videos are given to them. Cause it's the algorithm. It's conspiracy theories.

0 (25m 60s):

It's crazy stuff. It's damaged. It's violent. We don't even realize it. And yet we give kids unfiltered access to it. I don't think they're seeking it out necessarily, but it's just they're people that has anybody ever direct message you with something that was weird. It was crude. It was unacceptable. I think all adults have had that experience yet. We let our kids have that unfiltered access. None of us would have do any of those things in real life. Would we? And yet when we give kids smartphones, without filtering, without watching what they're doing, we're allowing all those things into our house, into their lives. One of the craziest things is if you look at it, Steve jobs, he didn't let his kids have an iPad, invented the iPad.

0 (26m 42s):

Wouldn't let his kids have one bill and Melinda gates. Wouldn't let their kids have smartphones. The founder of Twitter, same thing. You want him to let his kids have social media. These people know, I don't know if you saw this a couple of weeks ago in the wall street journal, but there was an article that was published because someone leaked information from Facebook. Facebook researchers have been researching how Facebook impacts teenage girls for three years now. And they have no. Now for three years that it has a really negative effect on teenage girls. And it increases their depression. Mainly because of body image issues. They've known this for three years. They know it.

0 (27m 23s):

And yet we're just going about life. Like everything's normal. I'm telling you all this because whether it's afraid of what other parents are doing or afraid of what your kids will think, we just got to let things happen. And it's bad if we want to protect our kids. And it's a God-given desire for us to protect our kids as parents. If we want to build a secure fortress up on a hill, we need to fear the Lord more than we fear man, more than we fear our kids, fear of the Lord is a secure fortress. So that's one thing it's not the fear of the Lord is not fear of me. There's a second thing though. It's not the fear of evil either.

0 (28m 3s):

This is interesting because some of you like Matt you're, you're still just fear mongering. No, no, no. It's not the fear of people. When you fear the Lord, you have nothing to be afraid of. As a parent, we don't have to be afraid of people. Now you, we can see this very clearly in Proverbs, 1923 in Proverbs, 1923, it says that the fear of the Lord leads to life. Whoever satisfied with it, the fear of the Lord will rest untouched by evil. Because when you fear the Lord, you don't have to be afraid of anything. That's going to happen to you. The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want, he leads me beside still waters. He even leads us into the darkest valley, the valley of the shadow of death. But I will fear no evil. I don't want to talk too much about this.

0 (28m 44s):

Cause our whole message was about this two weeks ago, how to defeat fear with God's love on your side, knowing that he's with you. We don't have to fear evil. And it's the same thing with our kids. When we fear the Lord, we were not afraid of evil. Instead we teach our kids about the realities of the world. Okay? I know that there is just this idea of Christians and I've seen it happen that Christian parents are like not telling their kids about anything, keeping them protected. But, but it doesn't say here that we build a bunker, we build a fortress so that they're ready for the world and whatever comes against them, not a bunker to hide them. So that then when they go to the first college party, when they're 18, they're like, oh my gosh, okay, no, that's naive.

0 (29m 29s):

Okay. We train our kids to be prepared for the evil that is in the world and they know how to handle it because we've talked about it. We've trained them. One of my favorite books I read this 10 years ago or something it's called notes from a tilt world notes from the tilt world, Andy Wilson. He says that the world is rated R and no one is checking IDs. He says, do not try to make it G by imagining the shadows away, do not try to hide your children from the world forever, but do not pretend there is no danger. Train them. That's what we need to do. As kids get older, we teach them more and more about the realities of the world. We don't pretend like things don't exist.

0 (30m 10s):

We teach them. We train them so that when they do go to college, when they do go out of the world on their own, they know what's out there and they know how to handle things. They know how to respond to direct messages when they come, that's what we need to do. We need to build a fortress, not a bunker, build a

fortress, not a bunker. So that's what I'm saying. We don't need the fear of evil. When we fear the Lord. I think one of the main ways to do this, and this is an application from this, the main way to do this. It's just to talk about stuff with your kids. Just talk about life. Talk about reality. Talk about evil. When things come up, those are the best times to talk about it.

0 (30m 50s):

When someone says something to them, talk about it. Don't ever sweep anything under the rug. I was annoyed by my mom. So much as a kid annoyed so much because we, I mean, we weren't allowed to watch like anything, but even when we were watching like the PG movie, when we were like 13, right? We're watching the movie and there's a man and a woman who aren't married, sleeping in the same bed together. Every time my mom would say, we don't do that because we're Christians. We do things differently. We wait until marriage. Every time I was like, mom, I know I was so annoying. And yet I'm so grateful to my mom for that because she taught me something that 80% of the world doesn't do. And it's hard to do in our world.

0 (31m 32s):

And yet Melissa and I were able to wait till marriage. And I'm so grateful to my mom for that. I love her mom. I love you. She watches my messages. I love you, mom. I'm so grateful that my mom talked about this stuff again and again and again, because it's hard to follow Jesus in our world and to do things differently. And we will, parents, you will be judged. You will be weird. Your kids will be weird, but guess what? That's okay. I don't want them to be like the rest of the kids. Anyways. We're not going to fear, man. We're not going to fear evil. We're going to fear the Lord. And that's why, that's why we need to learn wisdom.

0 (32m 14s):

Proverbs one seven. This, this is what the fear of Lord actually is now. So pay attention, fear. The Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. The fear of the Lord means we're going to learn and understand the world. We're going to gain wisdom. That's why this starts the book of Proverbs out. Here's a father. If you read the prophets writing to a son, this is how you should live in our world. You need wisdom because there are situations that aren't black and white, that aren't clear and you need God's wisdom in your life in order to handle them. Parents, you need God's wisdom in your life to know how to handle the crazy situations that we're dealing with today. And that's why the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. We've got to learn. We've got to understand.

0 (32m 54s):

We've got to read. We've got to study. That's why for this series, we have a whole page just dedicated to the series because we know there's so much for us to learn, but this update required. Go to rise.

[denver.com/update required](https://denver.com/update-required). We have a, for every message, we have links to articles, to videos, to books, get some of these books. And if you heard Sawyer talk about it. If you go upstairs after the service, you can get a free book. Parents. We have a book for you that that can help you. It's called tech wise family. It's a great book. We want to encourage you. There's a parent debrief after this service. If you're online, go to rice

and Broadcom slash update required, and there's a little button you can press and you can sign up for that free book too, because we've got to gain knowledge and we've got to realize, okay, following Jesus wisdom from God now, how do I apply this in this digital age we're living in.

0 (33m 38s):

So that's what we're going to do now right now. And wisdom means that there isn't necessarily right or wrong. Sometimes it's smart or stupid, right? Because with me on there and we've got to figure out how to handle situations differently, different kids, different situations, all that stuff. So I would say that this should be your basic, here's one point that I'm giving you is application. And I know that as we step out into this application portion, we're saying that it's going to be different for every set of parents, every family. I know that don't, don't be worried about other people judging you. They will. Don't be worried about what I think it's the fear of the Lord, right? Not the fear, man, but this is, I think the basic application is that when it comes to smartphones and social media, all digital stuff, you need to either limit or eliminate when it comes to your kids, depending on the device, depending on the social media, depending on the platform, it might be different for your kid, but you need to either limit or eliminate.

0 (34m 33s):

I don't think the other option is working. It's not. Here's why screen time has been shown again and again, and again, increases anxiety, depression, loneliness, unhappiness, and it lessens emotional connections without fail. There's been a number of studies that have kids self report, how they feel when they're using digital devices. And in her book, I, Jen, Jean Twinkie, who's one of the leading researchers on there, talks about this. And she says that without fail kids, when they're using doing anything digitally with a screen, it doesn't matter what it is.

0 (35m 12s):

They report feeling less happy. This is social media and it's video games, Fortnite, whatever, okay. To talk, whatever it is, they feel less happy when they're using digital digital stuff. However, in all the other activities that were not digital that they tested kids with, they felt happier. Pretty simple, right? She's like, this is so simple. This isn't even a Christian book guys, sociologists, just saying, this is what kids self-report. They use devices less happy. Don't use devices happier. This is what she said. Her conclusion. There's a simple, free way to improve mental health, put down the phone and do something else. Anything else?

0 (35m 52s):

Yes. Thank you. This is just knowledge, right? This is just wisdom. You don't have to even be a Christian to know that this is true. She mentioned three different studies that have proven this. And one I want to mention was with a Danish group. So these were kids, teenagers that were using their devices all the time already on social media already. And they just had those kids stop for one week, nothing for one week compared to the control group, they continued doing all this stuff that they normally do. They found that the group that just one week off of their devices were more happy, less, lonely, less depressed. And by substantial margins,

they were less likely to be sad, angry, or worried, simple right.

0 (36m 35s):

Limit or eliminate. So here's some possible recommendations. And this is actually a lot of these come from the American academy of pediatrics. This is from doctors, right? We're learning knowledge here. That's the fear of the Lord. It's beginning of knowledge, leads to wisdom. And this is what they recommend parents. If your kids are under 18 months, they don't need screen time. None is the recommendation. 18 to 24 months. You can watch something with them. That's very good content. Okay. Watch it with them. If they're ages two to five, one hour per day or less is the recommendation. And it's still very good content, right? A lot of times that you pre watched or watching with them, ages six and older, they recommend no devices at night that you have in your household times and places like dinner table, for example, that are screen-free period times and places screen-free.

0 (37m 33s):

And that you limit overall usage completely. Even in China. Did you guys see this? It's illegal for kids to play video games more than three hours a week on the weekend. Okay. Even China knows that this is not good. And it's proving that it's actually working here. So here's the saddest thing that when they look at teenagers, if you use two hours or more a day, that's when the suicide numbers start to increase it two hours or more a day. If you get up to five hours, that's when there's significant increase in suicidal thoughts, five hours a day. And when kids are now restricted, even if they don't like it, they're mad at their parents for doing it. There's a study out of ISU that found that over with over 1400 families that it works.

0 (38m 17s):

When you limit devices, it increases mental and emotional health limit or eliminate for Melissa. And I we've talked about this and our kids are young. Our oldest is four and a half. And here you guys are going to say, you don't know your kids. Aren't old enough. I know. I don't know if you're not, but what we have decided is that our kids will not have smartphones. If they need a phone, they'll get a dumb phone. Really? There's they still exist. You know, you can call five numbers and that's it. Okay. Dumb phone. And if they are like, oh, well, they're lost. They're driving around. Now that they're in a car, you can still buy a GPS. Garmin needs the business. Right? Okay. So that's what we've decided. We've also decided no social media, as kids get older, they are able to deal with it a little bit better.

0 (39m 3s):

And then hopefully by the time they're adults, we've trained them well enough that they know how to do it. So that's what we've decided as a family everybody's family is going to decide differently about what to limit and what to eliminate. But we've got to do it. Some of you are saying, well, my kid will hate me maybe, but they'll love you for it. Eventually. They'll love you forward. Eventually some of you are like, well, Matt, life is crazy. It's just insane. In our household. My kids are crying. They're angry, upset. I just have to give him the screen time because that's the only way I can get peace in my life. Do you know what the Proverbs tells us about

this? If I can jump back to Proverbs 29, 27, I'm sorry. Proverbs 29 17. Is this the verse we don't have? Okay.

0 (39m 45s):

I still got a Bible. Proverbs 29, 17. It says, discipline your children. And they will give you peace. That's what it says. We think just letting them do whatever they want. Then they'll get out of our hair and it's peaceful and calm. Finally, it's actually the opposite because it's leading them in to chaos in their lives. But if you discipline your children, you put restrictions. You say, this is what's right. This is what's wrong. This is what we're going to do. As a family, we're going to be different and weird. It's okay. It will give you peace in the long run, discipline your children and we'll give you peace.

0 (40m 24s):

Okay? Two other things, some of you are saying, well, and I've talked with parents. If they'd say this, they're like, well, my kid needs to be on social media because if they're not, everything happens on social media. They get a snap and then they know wherever he's hanging out. And it's the fear of missing out FOMO. My kids will miss out on all the stuff that their friends are doing. Here's what studies do. Show kids that are on social media. It actually increases their fear of missing out. Because now they're seeing what everybody's doing all the time. It doesn't diminish it. And here's the saddest thing of all. I, this one really struck me. Maybe not satisfying, but it really struck me kids today spend 50% less time with their friends in person than we did a generation ago.

0 (41m 7s):

So their kids aren't hanging out anyways, get them off their devices. Maybe they will. And then they'll be happier. There'll be emotionally stronger. And that develop as people. Some of you are still saying, well, Matt, my kids are different maybe, but are you willing to take the risk? I think a lot of time kids are like ducks, calm on the surface. It looks like everything's okay. But underneath the water, they're paddling like crazy. The anxiety and depression they're feeling is overwhelming. You don't even know. Don't take the chance that your kid is the exception to the rule. Love your kids, discipline them and fear the Lord. And then your kids will have a secure fortress.

0 (41m 51s):

And that's what we want. Right? Let's do it. So I know that there's a lot of stuff in this message right now. This is a tough subject. It's difficult. But if you're a parent in here, I want you to take a step of faith in the fear of the Lord. What is the one thing you're going to do this week? That's different. Maybe it's to have a conversation with your kids for the first time or the second time or the hundredth time, whatever it is, you got to have that conscience. Maybe it's to set some parameters. This is how many hours you can have during the week, or, or you can only have hours on the weekend. Maybe it's to eliminate devices, maybe it's to get rid of social media accounts. I don't know, but I encourage you to take one step today, parents, whatever it is, you can go upstairs. We got a free book for you.

0 (42m 32s):

We'll have a debrief with parents, some great questions that we're going to be talking about in groups. And I just encourage you to take a step of faith. Parents let's build a secure fortress for our kids so that they're ready for the world. Let's pray, Lord God. There's been a lot of practical wisdom that you've given us today. And I pray that we would be able to grow in knowledge because that's the fear of the Lord to grow in knowledge, to have wisdom in our lives, to know how to walk with you, not afraid of what other people will think, but in the fear of the Lord, Lord, God, I want to fortress for my kids. The world is hard. It's it's rated R and I want them to have a fortress so that they're ready for whatever the world throws at them.

0 (43m 16s):

And I pray that for all the kids in our church, Lord God, we pray a blessing over them for protection for each one of them. Lord God for the parents that have to make some difficult decisions today and every day, give them the courage and the strength to fear you more than they fear anyone else. And in that fear of the Lord know, let them know that they have nothing to be afraid of or got build a secure fortress for our families, Jesus name. We pray. Amen.