

Wrapped In Love- Strange Love

Sermon Notes

December 17, 2017

Strange Parenting:

- Many Nordic women will bundle up their infants, put some cream on their face, place them in a stroller and park them outside in sub-zero temperatures to nap.
 - The belief is that exposure to the elements makes them stronger, more resilient, and become more adaptable to the harsh weather.
- Harp Seal Pups are cared for by their mother for two weeks and then they are abandoned. It takes up to five weeks of near starvation before the pup will develop enough skill to seek and ingest food. This is key to their development in learning to survive.
- How about the variety of birds that kick their offspring out of the nest, so that they can learn to fly.

American parenting.

- Risk-averse. Avoid activities that could hurt you like swings, climbing trees, or trampolines.
- We run interference for our children so that they do not feel conflicted, experience difficulty, or acknowledge weakness of any kind—all kids get trophies.
 - Thus, kids work less, deflect hard choices, don't own mistakes.
 - As a result, kids can struggle with mental perseverance, become unmotivated, and be shocked by failure later in life.
- Our values guide this approach.
 - Happiness is the primary end.
 - Safety trumps risk taking.
 - Taking the path of least resistance often results in avoiding difficult and potentially better paths.

God's Parenting.

- Mary is chosen to become the mother of the Messiah and is given little information. **Luke 1:26-38**
 - He will be the Son of God, the promised one.
 - His kingdom will reign eternally.
 - She had to ask how this could happen since she was a virgin.
- God put Mary and Joseph in a very difficult position publicly. **Matthew 1:18-25**
- God did not provide a five star travel itinerary to and while in Bethlehem.
 - Mary had to travel 108 miles while pregnant from Nazareth to Bethlehem by animal or by foot.
 - Her awaiting accommodations are... (oops! That was forgotten.), so you will have to go to a cave or barn.

- Forget the question of Queen-sized or two double beds, there were no beds not even for the Christ child.
- A feeding trough became the only option to lay the newborn King.
- The guest list for seeing the newborn king was shepherds and gentile foreigners.
- Oh Mary, don't get too comfortable in Bethlehem, you are going to need to flee to Egypt because your child's life is going to be threatened. Where is the security and safety? **Matthew 2:1-18**
 - They had to run in fear.
 - Many other babies and toddlers died in his place.
- Let's not forget that Jesus was doing this in "obedience" to his Father. **Philippians 2:5-8**
 - He was told by the Father he must humble himself and become a human being—begin as a baby! (7-8a)
 - He was told he must go and die for us—a horrible death at that! (8b)

God's Values.

1. **Pure love** goes to the greatest ends regardless of hardship or self-cost.
2. **Complete restoration** could only be accomplished with the ultimate sacrifice.
3. **Being a servant** (**Philippians 2:7** "*...he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant...*") of others requires turning upside down what is deemed valuable by us as human beings.
4. **Glory belongs to God** alone, lest any man boast in him-self. **1 Corinthians 1:26-31**