

Series: Church Strategy
Sermon title: '*Lengthen & Strengthen*'- Parents &
Children
Scripture: Psalm 78:1-7
Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church
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Our church **vision** is that we would be people who:

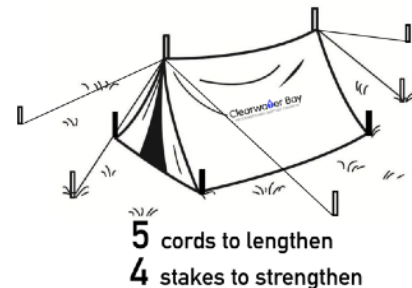
- **BEHOLD** God. We want to be people who know him, people who worship him daily, people who love his word and long to see him.
- **BELONG** to one another. We want to be people who are so connected that we are continually building up one another with our gifts, living life together in tight community and meeting together in small groups.
- Are **BEING SENT** out locally and globally. We want to be people who proclaim his greatness in the spheres of influence that God has put us in...our family, neighbors, co-workers and friends. And..we want to be taking the message of Jesus to those who have little or no access around the world.

We come today to week 3 of our **Church Strategy**, which is called *Lengthen & Strengthen*. We are looking at 5 cords that we need to lengthen; areas of ministry that we need to stretch out in....ministry areas that we need to grow in.

In essence, we are asking...

What are some ways that we **CAN** Behold God, Belong to one another more deeply or Be Sent out to tell others about Christ?

- **Prayer**
- **Proclamation of the gospel**
- **Parents and children**
- **Plant *multiplying* small groups**
- **Panta ta ethne (all the nations)**



We need to lengthen and deepen our Prayer lives. That was week 1. Apart from him we can do nothing...so we better lean on him and go to him in everything....through Prayer.

Week 2, last week...we looked at lengthening our efforts to Proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to those around us. We saw in Romans chapter 1 that we are OBLIGATED to share with those around us. We should be EAGER and passionate about sharing our faith. And we should be UNASHAMED of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

This week, we come to the 3rd cord, the 3rd area that we need to lengthen.....ministry to **Parents & Children.**

Let's pray.

If you have your Bible, which I hope that you do...turn to **Psalm 78**. We will read verses 1-7.

We are simply going to take a big drink from God's word.

Psalm 78

1 Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth! 2 I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, 3 things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. 4 We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done. 5 He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children, 6 that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to *their* children, 7 so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.

Turn to **Psalm 145 verse 1.**

1 I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever. 2 Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever. 3 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable. 4 One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts. 5 On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate. 6 They shall speak of the might of your

awesome deeds, and I will declare your greatness. 7 They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.

Deuteronomy 4:9 says,

9 Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children's children.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 says,

4 Hear, O Israel; The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. 6 And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. 7 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. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Mark 10:14, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God."

Ephesians 6:4, “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

So, the Bible is quite clear that we not only have an obligation to share our faith with those around us....but we have an obligation to pass the faith along to the next generation.

Notice these important phrases that we just read:

- **We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.**
- **He commanded our fathers to teach to their children, 6 that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to *their* children, 7 so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.**
- **One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts.**
- **Make them known to your children and your children’s children.**
- **You shall teach them diligently to your children**

- **Fathers, bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.**

Why did I include “Parents & Children” into the strategy of our church? I could have found another thing that started with ‘P’, right?

Well, there are few reasons.

1. Family is one of if not THE strongest values in East Asian cultures.
2. One of the areas that people say they need the most help in....is how to parent and how to be a better husband and wife.
3. As Christians, we are commanded by God to pass the faith along to the next generation, in fact we must because if we don't pass it along...then there will be no faith in Christ here in the next generation.
4. Our church needs to grow **internally** in this area. We need to continue to train our people how to be better parents and how to instruct our children so that....they ‘hope in God’ and don't forget him.
5. We need to reach out **externally**. We are surrounded by parents with kids that are unchurched.

These last 2, growing internally and externally are our main focus in the time that we have left. And to be honest, I'm really calling you to pray today. I'm not going to give you any cool ideas or programs to launch.

We need to ask God HOW he wants us to lengthen this cord...PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

It's a double stranded cord. It's 2 cords weaved together. Internal and external.

- I. **INTERNALLY-** we want our families to BEHOLD GOD *together*. Dad leading primarily and Mom leading when Dad cannot or will not. Families who read the Bible together; who do family worship together. Families that as Psalm 78 said 'Arise and tell them to their children, so that they should hope in God and not forget the works of God but keep his commandments.

Here is how we do it.....

As we read in **Deuteronomy 6**, **'these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. 7 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.'**

First, Dad and Mom....the word has to be in our heart. There's no faking it here. Kids will see right through it. We have to love the word if we want our kids to love the word.

Second, we have to actually have to plan a set time to teach and instruct and then in the ebb and flow of life....talk about the our great God.

So, parents.....family devotions has to happen. I'll be honest, we fail sometimes but we haven't given up. You got to keep going and constantly regroup.

Dad or Mom: choose a passage of the Bible or use a devotional book if you need help that has scripture. Do it after dinner time, before you even get up from the table. We have found that works for us. If we try to do it after people get up from the table, it usually fails.

The church needs to and wants to train you and provide you the resources to help you parent well and pass the faith along to the next generation....to equip you to bring them up in the instruction of the Lord.

I'd love to meet with you over coffee and help you in any way to get family devotions running in your home.

II. **EXTERNALLY**- We need to reach out to families. We have families all around us who are unchurched or have never heard the gospel of Jesus Christ. They not only need salvation in Jesus, but need help in raising their kids according to the Bible.

HKUST- the field on Sundays is full of parents with kids who don't go to church.

Pavilia- new complex just behind our church with 600 units. We are perfectly situated to make an impact there.

TKO area- tons and tons of families.

VBS- every year we have 100 kids come during the summer but most of them will never enter our church. We have to do a better job at reaching them.

Part of that means that we need to continue to enhance and build our children's ministry SO THAT when we invest and invite....we can actually meet their needs.

So, church.....I am calling you to pray. Would you pray for our parents and pray for our kids? Pray that we can build strong families as we lengthen our ministry to equip parents! Would you pray for our outreach to families? It's not going to happen by big events as much as we are going to reach parents and kids by you investing your life into another family.

So I am calling you to pray, yes...but i am also calling you to lengthen your own life.....lengthen your own ministry....lengthen your own willingness to invest in others. Serve in the children's ministry! Serve your neighbors. The front door of your home is the side door to the church. Shave some time off your too busy schedule and open the door of your life. Pray more. Proclaim the gospel more. Invest in parents and children more.

We will not hide what God has done from the children but will tell to the coming generation.