

Raising Courageous Children in a Cowardly Culture

Introduction

We are currently living in what we believe to be the most cowardly season in our nation's history. We are a nation of people who for the most part, no longer pursue the truth in any arena. We have been led to believe, rather we have been bullied to believe that there is no God and the truth should not, cannot be spoken if it offends anyone. We have collectively decided that we have an unwritten constitutional right not to be offended by anyone or anything! And yet if some brave soul does proclaim to know and discuss the truth in an open forum, especially a truth regarding any moral issue, he or she is immediately accused as a hater or host of other derogative labels that often results in the marginalization or silencing of that lone, brave voice. These types of assaults have created an immense amount of confusion and fear not only in the secular community, but in the Christian community as well, which has had a stifling impact on how many parents are raising the next generation. Instead of raising a generation of men and women of courage and purpose who have a common moral identity in the greatest nation on the face of the planet, we are willingly raising a generation of snowflake children who are offended by every spoken word outside of their close minded belief system. We are for all intents and purposes, raising weak minded cowards who have become drones in a politically correct society who continue to proselytize the false narrative that truth is just relative and that to be tolerant, one must believe that all views are equally valid. This twisted philosophy is suffocating the truth in our culture and forcing us into a type of immoral and unethical bondage. It is amazing to consider that in just a few hundred years Americans have forgot that our nation was founded by a people who escaped religious bondage and tyranny; fought for their freedom and liberty which gave rise to decades and decades of prosperity, which has led to complacency and even now apathy; ultimately resulting in bondage...again!

The assault on the truth is nothing new in our society or for that matter, since the creation of man. When Jesus stood shackled before Pilate accused of heresy and blasphemy by the religious rulers of that time, Pilate asked, "*So you are a king?*" *Jesus answered, "You say*

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*correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?"*¹ (Emphasis added) And that has been our mantra for decades and decades "*what is truth, who can really know the truth?*" which has led to our embracement and the sickening acceptance of moral relativism, which is best described as nothing more than a philosophy which has turned into a pseudo religion that asserts there is no global, absolute moral law that applies to all people, for all time, and in all places. Influential German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) best known and studied for his writings on good and evil, wrote, "You have your way, I have my way. As for the right way, it does not exist."²

What has become apparently very convenient, is that in a culture that no longer believes and continues to do its best in killing off the belief in a merciful and just God, embracing moral relativism in our culture completely dismisses any notion of accountability and moral responsibility that one has to his or her family, society, or to the nation. If there truly is "no right way" that exists, I therefore, am not nor should not be responsible for the outcomes or consequences of my behavior or the choices that I make! But that assertion is nothing more than a pile of rancid garbage because we do know intrinsically that there is a right and wrong; that we can search for truth and know the truth. My wife Shelly, the co-author of this book, is the brains of the Capra household; she graduated college with honors earning a math degree and a computer science degree. While discussing the whole notion of the question of what is right and wrong, she made this statement; "If there is no real right or wrong, then one plus one can equal three; and if one plus one can equal three, how then are we able to build a stable house, bridge or building?" There are absolutes and truths that we can't not know! In fact one of my favorite Christian Apologists is Dr. Frank Turek who points out that "we often know right from wrong best by *our reactions*."³ (Emphasis added.)

As an example, I was talking to a very diverse group of young men and women at a leadership event held at Texas A&M University last year. As I stood in front of the group, I asked the question "is there a right and wrong?" Few gave a slight nod, most nervously looked

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around to see if others would answer. I was taken back by the fact that they not only hesitated to answer the question but there was a palpable reluctance to answer this question. Finding no one willing to respond, I asked, “Is punching a newborn baby in the face okay to do?” At once the entire audience erupted in shouting out, even some screaming “No, how terrible, who would do that!” (We often know by *our reactions*.) I went on to tell them that in all likelihood they would be taught and/or exposed by college academia and others that some cultures thought this behavior was perfectly acceptable. The young crowd responded in great disbelief with statements like “that is ridiculous, that is stupid, that is wrong, who could actually believe that behavior is acceptable?!” “Exactly” I stated, so is there a right and wrong I asked again... “YES” they shouted together. Of course there is right and wrong and to say there is not is nothing more than a vile excuse to remain blameless and unaccountable for one’s behavior or immoral positioning.

So why did this young group first hesitate on the question if there is a right and wrong? Because, we believe, they have been taught what we call “stinkin thinkin.” Their minds have been polluted to believe that one cannot express or define what moral, courageous behavior truly looks like; and if no one person is able to define this, then certainly a society is in no position to determine morality as well. The other reason for the lack of response is the fact that many young men and women have not been trained or prepared during their respective upbringing to face questions regarding moral reasoning. In fact I have found anytime I mention moral leadership, my audiences become a little nervous and uneasy. I find this behavior to be somewhat amusing because they have fell for the lie that morality is simply a personal thing...bull!!

The word morality is a noun, defined as “conformity to the rules of right conduct” The word moral, is an adjective, defined as “...concerned with the principles or rules of right conduct or the distinction between right and wrong; ethical”.⁴ Yet young men and women have been deluged with the exhortation that we can’t push “our” morality on someone else; or who exactly determines the type of morality to follow; or better yet, each person must determine their own morality; but is that correct? Of course not, this is a recipe for disaster in any organization, in any family and above all in a free society. Our entire American legal system and the codification

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of our statutes are based on ethical principles and the moral law. Ah, but what is the “moral law?” According to Dr. Norman Geisler, the Moral Law is “the law not everyone obeys, but the law by which everyone expects to be treated.”⁵

Our democratic republic determined very early that individuals are expected to act and behave a certain way for the safety, health and welfare of our citizenry and country. While our nation is based upon the principle that all men and women are endowed with inalienable rights given to us by God the Creator, this does not mean that individuals can have it their way, or can do whatever they want in a free society. To suggest that they can and will is nothing more than the imposition of radical autonomy. Yet we are in a season that continues to worship on the altar of moral relativism in which the fundamental tenant is that truth cannot be known. Radical autonomy left unchecked will lead to chaos, which ultimately leads to anarchy. Imagine for a moment applying the radical autonomy theory to any organization; individual employees deciding for themselves what organizational rules to follow, not adhering to the rules, behavior or conduct expected by organizational leaders. The devastating consequences would be apparent; loss of focus, loss of vision, loss of direction, loss of control and ultimately the death of the organization. The same can be said for a society and the same is true for a family.

As Christians we sometimes find it easy to blame academia for poisoning the minds of our children, or better yet, blame democrats, republicans, atheists or a host of others we believe are responsible. It has been our experience that within the church community we can be consumed with finding the villain, searching for the demon behind each tree that is responsible for our child’s behavior. However, I submit as professing Christian parents we need to be willing to look into the mirror and ask ourselves, where am I culpable, what has been my responsibility in training up and raising my children; have I prepared them for the challenge ahead that is a secular world who openly detests and mocks our faith, our purpose and identity?

As a family, we have lived through seasons in our Christian walk where we have been exhorted to pull our children out of public schools and either home-school them or place them in very expensive private Christian schools, so as to shield them from the horrors of the secular

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world. Quite honestly, we never felt led by the Lord to do these things. And while this may offend some in our community, we have seen first-hand the dangers of attempting to keep children in a so-called “religious bubble” never truly exposed to anything or anyone outside that bubble, only to let them go off to college or to a fallen world, neither prepared mentally or spiritually for the battles that will come. Their lack of preparation makes them extremely susceptible to twisted philosophical lies and amoral musings which can easily seduce them to the temporary pleasures that the world offers.

This book is about how we raised and prepared our children to face and battle a cowardly culture. We do not claim to be perfect parents nor do we have all the answers on how to raise successful children as this is in no way meant to be a “How To” book. This book is about our journey, our struggle and joy as a husband and a wife of over three decades and what it took for us to raise six outstanding courageous children of faith and purpose, who are called to live, serve and thrive in a cowardly and corrupt culture. This book is also about hope, that confident expectation that as parents, we can still make a difference in the lives of our children, no matter their age, no matter our mistakes and regardless of our current situation.

We do not have a set of magical steps to share that are easy to follow and produce great children. Throughout our walk we have learned how children desire structure, desire borders, desire love, affection, direction, security and there is no “one size fits all!” There were times rightly or wrongly we just shot from the hip during a given situation, but we understood the importance at that particular time, to act. We have also learned that we can do everything right in training up our kids, and they may still make a personal decision that impacts their life in a negative way. What we are saying, what we are crying out, is that we have a duty, a moral responsibility to consciously recognize that if we do not pour greatness into our children, if we fail to morally train them up, if we fail to give them a strong foundation of physical, psychological and spiritual armor, they will be vulnerable to be snared by the trappings of a fallen culture.

My wife and I have daily raced into the arena to battle on behalf of our children and have done our best to prepare them for their fight that is rightly theirs to pursue. They each have

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endured challenges and adversity; yet have grown to become light-bearers in a dark world, called to push back against the darkness that attempts to overtake our culture, our state and our nation. There have been numerous times we have failed miserably to be the examples we are called to be; but Shelly and I promised each other we would never give up our fight for our children, now their respective spouses and their children they will be blessed with someday; our fight for them would never end until we are called home. Finally, we humbly recognize that any success we have had as loving and caring, yet very fallible parents was only due to serving a merciful and loving God who has provided the ultimate example of what a parent will do for the children He loves.

James and Michelle Capra