

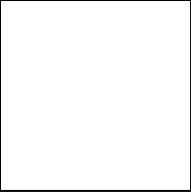
## MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF PARENTING PART I - INSECURITY

The previous two months newsletters were my ideas and perspectives on Godly families and understanding discipline. The standards I put forth may seem high. However, I believe they are in line with the word of God. I realize that these standards are very hard to achieve. As parents, we have many challenges that interfere with achieving these standards. These challenges are opportunities for healing and restoration. These challenges have become more and more apparent to me as I participate with families in their journey. Challenges come in the form of heartbreak, woundedness, and insecurity. These challenges come from pervasive emotional neglect as well as any type of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse. There is always a strong element of shame which strangles the life out of people because of the oppression it brings. Parents are also challenged to change their parenting blueprints from how they were raised. Grief and forgiveness enter into the mix of all of these challenges. I could go on and on and on. However, these challenges seem to be the ones that disable most parents from parenting with love.

It would be an impossible, not to mention overwhelming, to write about all of these in one newsletter. PART I focuses on insecurity. Insecurity is merely another cognitive rendition of fear. Sometimes we call it self doubt. We may say that we're feeling anxious. Insecurity manifests itself in selfishness, people pleasing, and overindulgence. Recently my pastor preached that insecurity causes us not to dare, not to dream, and not to serve. Insecurity destroys our efforts to achieve. Insecurity takes us out of relationship with God. Insecurity takes us out of relationship with others. We begin to doubt God's love for us. We doubt our being lovable. We doubt others. We lose hope. What do we do?

As Christians, our hope is in God. Our hope is in our Savior, Jesus Christ. I suggest that when you get overwhelmed by insecurities to immediately turn to God. The Word says that God "will never leave you or forsake you" (Deuteronomy 31:6, 31:8; Joshua 1:5; 1 Kings 8:57). By connecting with God we get help in calming our fears and insecurities. Cling to your favorite scripture on fear. If you don't have one, do a word search. There are many scriptures throughout the Bible to help calm your fear. This "co-regulation" with God helps us balance our brain. Our confused and distorted thinking becomes more rational. We are then connected with God and can hear his wisdom for us. I would be amiss if I didn't suggest a healthy dose of breathing and relaxation along with this. Feeling insecure can become your identity. You can change this by changing your outlook and perspective. Care about what God thinks, not what others think. Release negative and condemning attitudes that hold you back from achieving. Phillipians 4:13 - "I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me." Ask God for help with this. Realize what God wants for you. There is nothing in the Bible that says God does not want good for us. Finally, realize God is for you. Romans 8:31 ". . . If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Insecurities take parents out of being a safe, secure base for their children. The challenge for parents is to overcome these insecurities. As you do this, you will become a safe place for your child. No one is perfect at this. No one can do it all the time. Remember this is a process. Remember this is part of your journey. Celebrate your victories. Face future challenges with



courage. Let God strengthen your faith so you can “press on” as Heather Forbes would say. Our challenges are all about healing. Healing comes from not hiding from your hurt and pain. Next month I will write about another one of these parenting challenges. In the mean time, focus on love.

In Christ,

*Ken Thom LPC*