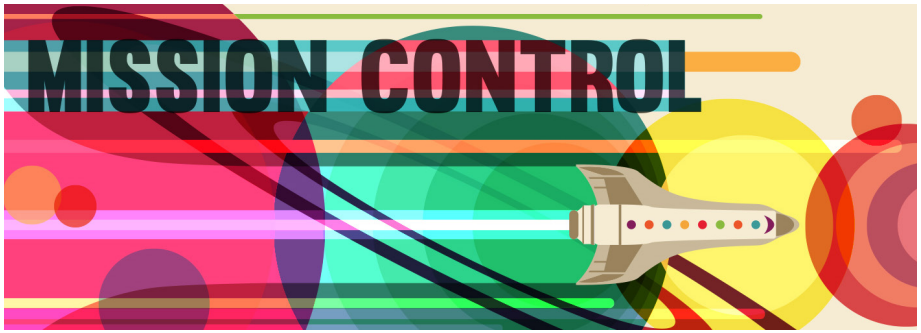


WEEK TWO

THE FALL • GENESIS 3:1-24

ASK THIS:

WHAT IS AT STAKE IF YOU DON'T OBEY?

REMEMBER THIS:

"The way we show our love is to obey God's commands. He commands you to lead a life of love. That's what you have heard from the beginning."

2 JOHN 6, NIrV

DO THIS:

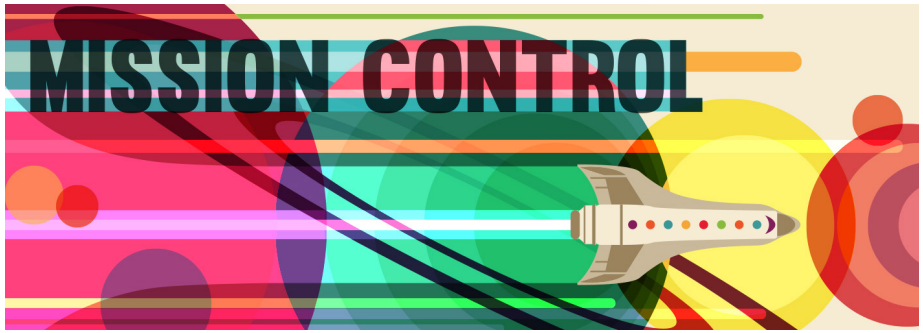
MEAL TIME

Q & A for kids: If you were in charge at home, what would your house rules be?
Q & A for parents: Do you think it was harder to obey as a kid, or is it harder as an adult?

OBEDIENCE:

TRUSTING WHO'S IN CHARGE BY DOING WHAT YOU'RE ASKED TO DO

AUGUST 2019 | PRETEEN



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HOW TO RAISE OBEDIENT KIDS FOR ALL THE WRONG REASONS

By Carey Nieuwhof

When you're trying to gain some semblance of control in the home, every parent is driven to try to elicit obedience from our kids.

And you know what? You can get pretty good at it. I did. Our kids rarely acted up in public when they were young. They said please and thank you. They were quite well-behaved.

Obedience is something we can want *from* our kids.
Let's face it. Well-behaved children can . . .

- boost our self esteem,
- make us look good in front of our friends,
- impress the grandparents,
- reduce our stress,
- make us feel like we've won.

But do we win? Scratch that. Here's a better question: Do ***they*** win?

Or do we just end up raising performance addicts? Children who behave . . .

- to impress,
- to placate,
- to calm things down . . .
- because they don't think they have any other options.

I admit, there were moments when I disciplined for those reasons. But then I realized how shallow and selfish that motivation really was.

Think about it. What if you reversed that? What if instead of wanting obedience *from* your kids, we wanted obedience *for* your kids?

A shift in motivation takes the focus off the needs of the **parent** and places the focus back on best interests of the **child.**

After all, our kids grow up.

If you discipline with the motivation of wanting obedience for your child, you parent with the end in mind. You realize that one day (soon) you're not going to be there. Your control will be non-existent, and they'll have to make all the decisions for themselves.

Make the shift from "from" to "for" and you'll see some changes:

Obedience will no longer be something you want from them to get rid of problem they're causing you, it will be something you want for them to learn how to solve the problems they're causing themselves and others.

Obedience will no longer be something you want *from* them to make you look good in front of others, it will be something you want for them to learn how to navigate relationships skillfully and humbly.

The list could go on. But do you see the shift?

So what if you decided to be clear on your motivation when you discipline your child? It might make a small difference today, but I promise you it will make a huge difference tomorrow. Not only in you, but especially in them.

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PARENT CUE

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