

Real Conversations with Natalie Eastman: Maureen Sharp, Parenting (Boys) at the Feet of Jesus, 10/28/2019

Natalie's Notes

Maureen's preface:

Biggest realization over these last 3 years: God really wants to be our helper and teacher as parent. And for each of us, the help we need and the help he gives is deeply personalized. We need to be being brutally honest with God about our pain, because often we're parenting from our pain.

- Talks from her pastor: "being filled by the HS" [LINK FORTHCOMING FROM MAUREEN]
- <https://biblehub.com/luke/11-13.htm>
- Also, a sermon [LINK FORTHCOMING FROM MAUREEN] on how The enemy is out for our families, our marriages, our kids. He's given us his Spirit, his Word, prayer, and the community of believers. He has given us what we need.
- **Our expectations** of our kids are really dangerous for us as parents. They set the person and us up.
 - Academic expectations. They didn't realize with their eldest that he was truly struggling academically. They didn't ask the right questions, because they were stuck on their expectations.
- Notice them - that teaches us something about ourselves, and that's about as helpful as they are. It teaches you what you value. Don't place them on others.
- Receive life with thanks and ask for nothing to change. RECEIVE. Let that settle into your bones.
- We tend to pray our worries for our kids. God has bigger things in mind for our kids.
- The little things that seem random, don't dismiss them.
 - In prayer, she kept getting Mt. 18. Seemed random at the time. Often the Holy Spirit is teaching, prompting, or nudging. Pray about whatever you notice. She discerned that they should sit down with him with other adults who were influencing his life: YL leader, their pastor. Lot of weeping on his part, beginning to shift.
 - They asked their son, "What if we stop thinking about what you can't do, what if we started thinking about what we need to put into your life? What if you met with someone you look up to, to mentor

- you?”
- My story about Nathan and me on our farm vacation: “Who do you want to be?”
 - It’s important to take the problem and make it a third entity. Put the problem in front of both of you and look at it together.
 - Best practice: find a time he’s in a good mood, things are going well and say, “Can we revisit what happened on that vacation?” Put the thing (attitude, action, whatever) in front of the both of you.
 - It’s important to start practicing these things with them as a pre-teen.
 - Ask myself: would I talk to someone I’m disciplining the same way I’m talking to my child?
 - Using the words “I respect…” with your sons develops trust with them. When we see that kind of behavior that we can respect, tell them.
 - A friend told her: “Maureen, I’ve learned that whatever you focus on grows.”
 - Along those lines, see Howard Glasser: Nurtured Heart Approach:
 - We turn all our attention to the moment when something doesn’t happen that’s good or does happen that’s bad; but we need to flip that script and look for and CATCH when they do the good things.
 - It’s very important to come up with a very consistent way of responding to your child, in terms of consequences. This is important, but is also secondary to catching the good and speaking to him about what he does that’s right.
 - Water it, so it will grow. Shine on it with your attention and focus.
 - Use words that are not about you (I appreciate, thank you etc.), but rather “I respect, I see, I notice” - very neutral. “I notice how kind you are to your sister. You know, *you are kind.*” You start to call them by that.
 - Ask the Lord to help you to see what’s in them. Water the good grass that’s growing.

God wants to teach us.

Question for Maureen from two friends: Tech Use

- Tech use for the iGen, for whom tech has been part of life since birth:
- Mo will send me link for Book her girlfriends have referenced that has been helpful.
- With her youngest, lot of conversations focusing on discussions about technology, about misuses of it.
- Principle: level with him. Get down to what really matters. Express your concerns. Share your heart. Maybe do it with your husband. Affirm the good, share that you want him to have healthy relationships and want you to have healthy relationships with screens. Our job is to help you leave here as a well-balanced adult. A well-balanced adult doesn’t spend XXX amount of time on a screen. How do you get some of what you want and how can we get some of what we want? You are still living in our house, but let’s talk about it. Try to

get them to understand the bigger picture. What do you want more of for him: Homework, face-to-face time with other people, having other interests (drawing, instrument, game)? Maybe balance the time

- We didn't grow up with games. It's their world and it's different from the world in which we grew up. Our job: to teach them how to think and to disciple them through it. "What's idolatry? Anything that's more important to a person than God."
- Give them freedom on things before they're asking/pushing/pulling for it. Then, disciple them through the freedom. Walk with them in it.
- For Marc, they asked him what limitations do you want to set for yourself? He set them, but then didn't follow them. Then, they had to step in with consequences. But they gave him opportunity.

A few of the resources Maureen mentioned:

[Nurtured Heart Approach to Child Raising](#)

<https://childrensuccessfoundation.com/about-nurtured-heart-approach/>

Recommended read: [Moving Mountains by John Eldridge](#).