

## Heart Talk Finale!

- Read through Proverbs 31:1-9 together.

The bible speaks clearly and often about how we are to diligently teach our children. Children learn a lot by watching us, but much of our teaching is spoken. The words we speak are so powerful. Lemuel's Mother in Proverbs 31 gives us an example of what loving our children through poor life choices looks like.

- ❖ Think of what you sound like when your child (or anyone under your authority) crosses a line, disobeys, or makes poor choices.

Lemuel's Mother set a pattern for us to follow when addressing sin in the hearts of our children:

- 1) She reminds Lemuel of her love for him and her responsibility to God for him.
  - 2) She asks corrective questions that help him examine his heart and get his attention.
  - 3) She corrects and admonishes him to change his ways.
  - 4) She cautions him about his lack of self-control and gives him counsel about the path he is on and where it will lead.
  - 5) She speaks purpose to his heart.
- ❖ Review the list above and consider how you correct your child(ren) (or how were you corrected as a child). How can you more closely align your parenting with the example she has set?
  - ❖ Which parts do you struggle the most with?
  - ❖ How have your child(ren) responded to your correction in the past?
  - ❖ How do you think your child(ren)'s response would change if you followed the pattern Lemuel's mother has set?

After correcting Lemuel, his mother infuses her last statement with life-giving purpose! She gives him a final "why" that is beyond his own selfishness to help encourage him to change his behavior. Regardless of the age of your child(ren), if you don't have a clear "why" in correcting and training them, it is easy for both you and your child to lose motivation and turn aside to selfish action.

- ❖ If you could make a purpose statement for your child(ren), what would it be and why? Use scripture to back up their purpose.
- ❖ Do you have a good handle on your purpose as a child of God? Can you articulate it to yourself when you are struggling with sin?
- ❖ Take a few minutes to write down God's purpose for us as believers based on scripture, as well as for you personally, and for your children. Review it often and memorize the

scriptures. Let the abundance and overflow of your heart be filled with God's life giving purpose to help shape and direct your child(ren).

## For Reflection:

- ❖ Read the following verses as a group. What insights can you glean from these scriptures to apply to your parenting or life in general?

- "...out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." Matthew 12:34
- "Death and life are in the power of the tongue." Proverbs 18:21
- "The wisest of women builds her house, but folly with her own hands tears it down." Proverbs 14:1
- A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish son brings grief to his mother." Proverbs 10:1
- "...but his father (David) had never interfered with him by asking, 'Why do you behave as you do?'" 1 Kings 1:6
- "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother' (this is the first commandment with a promise), 'that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.' Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."
- "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your city gates." Deuteronomy 6:5-9 (CSB)

## Memorize!

- ❖ Set aside time this week to memorize one or more of the scriptures above or one that you chose for your purpose statements.