

The Perils Of McParenting

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Today's society seems to be geared toward short-term, quick fixes of problems and situations instead of long-range character building when it comes to parenting. There are hundreds of parenting styles: experimental parenting, default parenting, friendship parenting, and the list goes on. Due to these inconsistent and ungodly parenting styles we are creating homes of havoc, difficulty and stress which develop the attitude of "I can't wait until my children are grown and out on their own!"

One parenting style that is probably more prevalent than any is what John Rosemond calls "McParenting." In his book, *Parenting by the Book*, (which I would recommend all parents add to their parenting resource library) Rosemond gives an explanation of McParenting. He writes, "Just like fast food, McParenting has no real value beyond that of satisfying an immediate need or reaching some short-range goal; furthermore, habitual McParenting, like eating all of one's meals at fast food joints, will lead to major problems down the road" (pg. 155). You might have watched the documentary about the man who ate 3 meals a day at a particular fast food restaurant for 30 days to see what effects it would have and he came close to causing major damage to his body. McParenting is similar to this fast food junkie. While it may "satisfy" in the short term, there are major issues to face down the road. McParenting is the mother who says about her 10 year old daughter, "She was so sweet and cute when she was 5 years old, but now she is a little monster!" Usually when that type of statement is made it comes from the perils of this so-called, McParenting.

Examples of this type of parenting are when mom and dad give in to short term fixes. They over-help on homework or actually do it for them. They bail their children out when they get in trouble with a teacher at school. They let them go ahead and play video games in church to keep them quiet instead of expecting reverence and discipline. They might "ground" their child for two weeks and then give them back their freedom within a few days because the parents get sick of the griping. They buy their children gifts to make them happy after a bad day. McParents

talk big and deliver small. Short-term action is the easy way because it keeps everyone happy...like a “happy meal.”

According to Rosemond, McParenting could also be called “nearsighted parenting.” He states, “Nearsighted parenting is synonymous with parenting that is often frantic and, therefore, exhausting. That’s because nearsighted parents are micromanagers. Not some of them, mind you, but all of them, and micromanagers are always frantic and exhausted. Parents who are in constant short-term mode tend to zigzag all over the parenting “map” like a ship without a compass. This makes the raising of a child far more arduous, far more stressful than it otherwise would be, no matter how inherently “difficult” one’s child may be” (pg. 151).

This type of quick-fix parenting comes with major difficulty later in life for the child and the parent. It also goes against God’s will for our families. Allow me to suggest a few reasons why McParenting comes with inherent problems.

1. It does not fulfill Proverbs 22:6 when God instructed, “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.” Short-term parenting does not commit to “training” and it does not focus on “the way” the child should turn out to be.
2. This parenting style is often inconsistent. One day the child is in trouble for griping and complaining, the next day his behavior gets him what he wants.
3. The focus with this type of parenting is on quickly solving the problem instead of building Godly character in the child. One’s aim is keeping the child happy instead of training him to love and obey God, love others and developing Godly morals.
4. McParenting is frustrating and exhausting because there are no real standards being met and long-term goals being focused on.
5. Discipline takes a back seat to “keeping peace” in the family.

The opposite of this type of short-term parenting is Biblical parenting. It’s parenting our children in the way he should go with a clear purpose and direction in view. It’s parenting with intention. Instead of flying by the seat of our pants we are setting our children up to spiritually succeed. Since heaven is our goal then creating spiritual champions is our daily task. We are not fretting over our child making the grade or the team, we are not trying to set them up

to become popular, and getting them into the best college is not our goal. Developing godly character is your calling and my calling as a Christian parent. May we refuse to spiritually malnourish our children with McParenting and start parenting with long-term, Biblical principles so as to raise spiritual champions who will tell the next generation of the works of God and how to obey Him (Psalm 78:7).