Dr. Larry E. McCall

Walking Like Jesus Ministries

[www.wljministries.org](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CLarry%20McCall%5CDropbox%5CGrandparenting%20with%20Grace%207%20week%20class%5Cwww.wljministries.org)

**GRANDPARENTING WITH GRACE:**

**GOSPEL GRANDPARENTING IN TODAY’S CULTURE**

**Session 6**

INTRODUCTION:

I. THE CHALLENGE OF DISTANCE:

 A. Nearly half of American grandparents live at least 200 miles from one or more of their grandchildren.

 B. How might the gospel empower you to stay close to your grandchildren who live far from you?

 C. Some ideas on how to intentionally pursue a close relationship with your long- distance grandchildren:

 1. Planned visits to their home

 2. Planned visits to your home: See Larry’s blog post: <http://www.wljministries.org/blog/2021/3/10/diy-grandcamp> 3. Family vacation trips:

 4. Use available technology for video chats:

 5. Send mail and packages:

 6. Consider ways to connect with your long-distance grandchildren spiritually: Larry’s blog post: [http://www.wljministries.org/blog/2020/10/29/how-to-do-a-bible-study- with-your-grandchildren](http://www.wljministries.org/blog/2020/10/29/how-to-do-a-bible-study-%09%09%09with-your-grandchildren)

 7. Move closer!

II. THE CHALLENGE OF DIVORCE

 A. The pain that divorce can bring to a family

 B. What applications of the gospel could help a grandparent facing this pain?

 1. First, let me encourage you to open your own hurting heart to your heavenly Father. What truth does 1 Peter 5:6-8 remind us of? 2. Second, let me also encourage you, as you are in this painful situation, to stay close to Christian friends who can pray for you and point you to Jesus.

 3. Third, apply gospel truths in guarding your heart against bitterness toward your child and/or child-in-law for the pain they have brought upon you and the family, especially the life-jolting pain the grandchildren must now be experiencing. See 1 John 4:11, 19-21.

 4. Fourth, remember that your grandchildren may need you now more than ever. As the older generation, we grandparents, can be anchors 5. Grandfathers, what if your son or ex-son-in-law is now largely missing from the picture due to a divorce or marital separation? This may be a situation that requires you to step up your involvement in the lives of your grandkids.

 6. Note: When there has been a painful divorce between your child and child-in-law, we must not take sides when speaking to our grandkids. See Ephesians 4:29-32.

 7. How does the gospel help you work through the painful effects of your *own* divorce in regard to grandparenting?

III. THE CHALLENGE OF ACCEPTING GRANDCHILDREN THROUGH REMARRIAGE OR ADOPTION:

 A. Maybe you have remarried after a divorce or after the death of a spouse, and your new spouse already had grandchildren. Or maybe your child has married someone who already had children.

 1. What should your relationship be with these “inherited” grandchildren?

 2. What are some gospel truths that might enrich our relationships with special grandchildren?

 3. You may need to demonstrate special compassion and patience with the child (or teen) who is warming up to you slowly. Be neither forceful, nor passive. Let the child determine the pace of growth in your relationship. Blending a family takes time—lots of time.

 4. Beware of the pain that can be caused by showing favoritism to “natural” grandchildren while treating “new” grandchildren as second class.

IV. THE CHALLENGE OF TAKING IN THE GRANDCHILDREN

 What practical relevance does the gospel of Jesus Christ have on this drastic life change that a growing number of grandparents are facing? (See 1 John 3:16; 1 John 4:16, NIV)

 Recommend *Raising Your Grandchildren* by Cavin Harper and *Grandparenting with Grace*, pages 77-79.

V. THE CHALLENGE OF DEFIANT RELATIONSHIPS

 A. What is the grandparent to do when his or her own heart is aching from a severely broken relationship with her own child, child-in-law, ex-child in law, or even her own teen or adult grandchild?

 B. What light might the gospel provide in that depressing darkness?

 1. Relying on the gospel of Jesus Christ enables us to do the necessary work of first exploring what our own contribution to the family brokenness and barriers might be. (The “safety” of the gospel. See Matthew 7:5 re: “log”)

 2. Ask God to search your heart and to show you your sin. Confess those sins he brings to your attention, asking his forgiveness and help in overcoming them.

 3. Is the Holy Spirit directing you to seek forgiveness from your child or grandchild for your part in the family conflict? Ask the Lord to guide you as you carefully think through your approach.

 4. Continue to pray and continue to show love as the Lord enables and leads.

FOR NEXT SESSION:

 Finish reading *Grandparenting with Grace*, especially chapter 7, “How Do I Leave a Godly Legacy?”

 Also, you may find encouragement from Larry’s blog post “The Legacy of a Godly Grandparent”: [http://www.wljministries.org/blog/2020/9/24/the-legacy-of-a-godly- grandparent](http://www.wljministries.org/blog/2020/9/24/the-legacy-of-a-godly-)