

How to Fight for Your Child Through the Enemy's Lies

When my daughters were growing up, we had some tough moments in which I needed to step in ... not at them, not toward them but for them.

In the fifth grade, my oldest was being accused of something she didn't do; she was called into the vice principal's office, and I was "notified." We lived very close by, so I dropped in and got to confront the authority confronting her.

My middle daughter was being pursued at middle school by a boy, and not in a good way, so confronting the boy with his mother at a school function seemed like the right place and right time. I was kind but direct. The "text requests" made it easy for me to confront.

My youngest daughter had a coach on her travel soccer team who was not only missing her heart but was shaming her with harsh and diminishing "motivational" tactics. I had a meeting with the coach. He thought it was going to be an evaluation of her play; I needed to make sure he knew it was an evaluation of his.

These are a few of my "victories." Unfortunately, there are quite a few losses—moments I didn't engage, or moments I didn't know were moments and get a chance to step in. Most of those times I got no shot at all was because the enemy used shame to have my children hide rather than share what happened.

They believed, as I so often did when I was young, the lie "Something is wrong with me, and my dad wouldn't help or understand or would be mad." So the whisper of "don't tell" prevented him, as it did me, the opportunity to swoop in and save the day.

Jesus said, "Let the little children come." (Matthew 19:14b). He also said, "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea" (Mark 9:42).

What none of us wants is to be used by the enemy to hinder our child's faith, much less be the cause of their turning from faith through our wounding or missing their hearts, missing opportunities to fight for them. The objective is certainly to wound them less and the goal, love them more.

I remember when my first child was born, a daughter. It was 1993, and the "birthing experience" was like one of those all-inclusive vacation packages, except you went home with a baby rather than a new hat and T-shirt. We checked in, were wheeled to our luxury suite, and everything happened right there in that room. Meals, fluffed pillows, warmed blankets—and they treated my wife pretty well too. It was an amazing process that concluded with the meeting of my little girl for the very first time.

Those next several hours in our suite were wonderful. The wait staff (nurses and doctors) checking on us, even bringing our little girl in and out while "we" rested in-between visits. Then they did the craziest thing: They asked us to leave. Our "vacation" was cut short; something about two nights were enough, and our new family needed to go home and allow them to get ready for the next little bundle of joy.

"Really? She just got here, and she's a little human being. We've never done this before. Hey, can one of the nurses come home with us for a few more days, weeks, years?" And so it began.

Just to make sure you don't think my wife and I were being totally irresponsible, we had read some books and attended a few classes, so clearly, we were prepared. You don't know what

you don't know, right? *What to Expect When You're Expecting* only goes so far.

The vast majority of this adventure is frontier and in a very honest and quiet moment, as a new dad, I was thinking, *I don't know how to do this; how am I going to keep this little creature alive and provide and protect her for the years to come?* From vacation to the front lines, I wasn't prepared. None of us are.

Because every heart—boys and girls alike—arrives on the planet wanting love, we have an opportunity as dads to love. Just like you, your kids are hardwired with the same fundamental core questions and longing you and I grew up with.

Do you see me? Do you love what you see?

Our children, especially when they are young, and no matter how old they become, will look to their fathers to answer these questions thousands of times. With words and actions, with your presence and questions, by listening and sharing, our answers can be “Yes and yes, I see you; and I love what I see.”

As we approach Father's Day, we are inviting dads across the globe to go after their hearts. Learn to fight against the enemy and for your kid. God gave them to us to provide and protect and to teach you how to love.

Join us on the *Exploring More Podcast* (episode 112) for a deeper conversation and better equipping of dads for the fight for the hearts of their kids.

You got this, Dad. You and Jesus have this! {eoa}

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Ashley, Hannah and Abbey, and live in a redemptive community of friends and allies who work to experience life together and offer life to all whom God brings across their path. Connect with them at .