



Counselor's Corner

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By Tosha Haynes

Attacks On the Heart

My friend and colleague, Daniel Moore, shared with you about the heart being key as we parent and walk with teenagers. I want to continue looking at the heart and specifically the frequent heart “attacks” our students face.

Our children hear messages from television, radio, magazines, social-media sites, friends and even family that often leave them feeling like they are not OK. They often feel they fall short of the expectations of others. These messages are attacks on their hearts. These messages are LIES.

As parents, we want to protect our children. We don't want them to be harmed or feel any pain. We want to stand in front of the arrow aimed at their heart and take the point ourselves. We see our children's struggles as a reflection of our parenting skills. We want to “fix things” for our babies, or we ignore the problems hoping they will right themselves. The problem with this natural instinct to protect, direct, hide and “fix” is that we are fighting lies and attacks on our children's hearts with our own brokenness, and we often miss out on teachable moments, growth, and opportunities for healing to take place.

I would like to encourage you (and myself) to embrace the attacks on your child's heart as opportunities for growth in both their relationship with you and in their relationship with Christ. Wouldn't we all prefer that our children experience academic struggles, peer-relationship problems and disappointments while they are under our roofs, versus at college or living alone with no one present to walk with them and guide them through the ‘heart attack’? It is difficult to see them struggle or hurt, but it **is** an opportune time to point them toward TRUTH. An opportunity to direct them towards JEHOVAH RAPHA: “the healer”; He can do more for their wounded hearts than we ever can.

What exactly does this look like? It differs with the student and the situation, but it can look like your hardworking student getting his first “C” on a report card and you reassuring him that you are proud of his effort. He needs to know that a “C” does not knock the earth off its axis. Let your actions and words show him your love for him and more important that God's love of his heart, His home, doesn't change (even when your initial thoughts are more like, “What in the world is going on? You're never going to get into college now!” Or, “What is that teacher's problem?”). When they talk about their day, the TRUTH may look like listening only, without giving

them advice or a strategic plan to “fix things”. It may look like walking *with* them through messy friendship situations without passing judgments or trying to walk *for* them. It could also look like pressing into a conversation that is uncomfortable. It will **always** look like surrendering your children to the Lord!

In the book *Shepherding a Child's Heart*, author Tedd Tripp says;

“The parenting task comes to an end. We are no longer the onsite shepherds. That aspect of our relationship is done. This will be true whether they marry or just take their place as an adult in their community. God intends for parenting to be a temporary task.”

In the final analysis, you must entrust your children to God. How they turn out will depend on more than what you have done in providing shaping influences. It will depend on the nature of their Godward commitment. Ultimately, you leave them to God, knowing that you can entrust your children to the God who has dealt so graciously with you.”

A Prayer for Today: Lord, thank you for the gift of our children. May we honor your gift by continuing to point them toward You. Please bind Satan and his lies from attacking their hearts. Refuse Satan the opportunity to use our fear and our words or actions as a weapon against our children. Thank you for your mercies and healing of our hearts as well as the hearts of our children. Amen.

Our Mission

Christ Presbyterian Academy, an educational ministry of Christ Presbyterian Church, assists Christian families in helping students come to know God, evaluate all knowledge and all life by His truth, and live transformed by His truth for His glory.

Our Motto

Soli Deo Gloria — To God Alone Be the Glory