Dear Parents,

 Parenting doesn’t have to be a Lone Ranger kind of job—that it’s okay to have a few mentors and reinforcements. I’m sure you can recall a few times in your life as a parent when you’ve gotten some unwarranted advice or even scolding in regards to your parenting skills. Most of this comes from well-meaning sources (your mom, sister, grandma, or an older friend), but it still doesn’t make it easy to take…or make it right. The video below will help you navigate these situations in a Godly and loving manner. It will also remind you of the all-important fact that God chose YOU to be your child’s parents. He trusts you to raise up Godly young people to continue the work of his Kingdom here on Earth. So take heart, have courage, and learn when to listen and when to smile politely and walk away.

<https://vimeo.com/parentministry/review/149143122/bf233646f6>

 Now we know how to discern between good and bad parenting advice. Having older parents, or a Godly couple in the church you look up to and who you can count on for advice, encouragement, and help is a great thing. A Godly thing. But there are times when we are made to doubt our abilities as parents; times when people insert themselves into your family when they shouldn’t, times when criticism and ‘advice’ are given freely, yet unjustifiably, and times when you let the seeds of doubt sprout in your head and heart because of something you do (or don’t do). It happens to all of us. That’s just one of the non-perks of parenting. How you deal with these situations, however, makes all the difference in the world both for you and for your child. SO . . . When you are criticized for how you parent, consider the motive behind the criticism.

 If it really is out of love and concern, acknowledge it and explain that you don’t see things that way. If it’s out of jealousy or pettiness, ignore it, pray for confidence and courage, and go on. \*If you are under continual or constant scrutiny (a mother, mother in-law, etc.), don’t run from the situation or ignore it. Let the person know you respect them, but that ultimately the children are yours to raise and you are doing so according to the way you and your spouse think best. Then tell them if they don’t want to risk further damage to your relationship, they need to keep their thoughts to themselves in the future.

 Acknowledge that you just might be wrong or have something to learn in some cases. Again, this will often depend on the spirit in which you are spoken to. Think about what was said, pray about it, and let God speak to you. Ultimately, the choice is yours, but as long as you are following God’s voice and his Word in regards to loving, teaching, and disciplining your child, you can lay down each night knowing you’ve done well that day. Remember. . . “*And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony*.” Colossians 3:14. When you love your children as Christ loves us, you are doing all you can.

Building Young Disciples,

Pastor Sarah