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Raising Kids with Love and Faith with Jared Haley and Chris Wilson
(The transcript is not 100% perfect)

James Early [00:00:00]:

Hey there, and welcome again to the Bible Speaks To You podcast. I'm so glad you've tuned in to listen today, and I'm doing something for this episode I've never done before. I have 2 guests on the same interview, and I really know you're gonna enjoy what they have to say. We're gonna be talking about fatherhood and how to be a good dad with a spiritual perspective in there. And my guests are Chris Wilson. Chris, it's great to have you here.

Chris Wilson [00:00:28]:

It's wonderful to be here. Thank you so much, James.

James Early [00:00:31]:

Also is Jared Haley. Jared, welcome to the Bible Speaks To You podcast

Jared Haley [00:00:36]:

Hey, man. It's so good, and, it's fun. I didn't know you've never had 2 guests before, so this will be Yeah. This will be an adventure.

James Early [00:00:44]:

Y'all are my guinea pigs here.

Jared Haley [00:00:45]:

Alright.

James Early [00:00:47]:

I met Chris and Jared a couple of months ago at a podcast conference down in Orlando, Florida called PodFest. And the more we talk, we realize we really connected, and, I've been a guest on their show, and I wanted them to be here to talk to you. One thing that I really love about Jared and Chris is they really are helping people to be all that God has made them to be. That's what makes them tick. And I wanna tell you just a little bit about them. Chris Wilson is a lifelong fitness and health advocate, and he's been in the fitness industry for 25 years. He lives in Florida with his wife. They've been married 18 years, Samantha, and they've got 2 kids.

James Early [00:01:31]:

He loves sports, especially college and pro football, and he loves to coach youth baseball. I assume that's your kids maybe?

Chris Wilson [00:01:38]:

Yeah. That's that's my son, mister baseball. And, we haven't looked back, man. I've been coaching baseball for 6 years. I love it.

James Early [00:01:49]:

Oh, that's cool. At heart, Chris is a family man. He loves traveling with his family, having game and movie nights. He wants to be there for his wife and his kids, and that's that's really beautiful. Most of all, he loves following Jesus, and he wants to be an example for others to do the same. Jared Haley has been a pastor and a public speaker. He has a master's degree in, I love this, transformational leadership and spiritual formation. I just think that's, a wonderful little niche to fill.

James Early [00:02:22]:

His passion is to help people discover how God has created them to live their lives in their fullest in every way. And he and his wife, Christiana, Haley been married for 15 years. They live in Palm Harbor, Florida. They've got 4 kids, and he too loves to be, with his family a lot, spend quality time, and he's devoted to following Christ and helping others do the same. The interesting thing about Chris and Jared, you look at them and they look like they're totally different types of guys, and in one way that's true, but they both have this passion to be helpful to others. And they work for a company called Critical Bench, which is dedicated to helping people be healthy and fit. Chris oversees their programs, and Jared is their video production specialist. Just to give you a little background, they come at at this, you know, from different angles, but they're there to help people.

James Early [00:03:14]:

And they also are cohosts of the Strong by Design podcast, and it brings a spiritual focus to fitness and health again with the premise that because we're made in the image and likeness of God, we've been created and designed to be strong in body, mind, and spirit. We had a fabulous conversation at PodFest, and that's why I really wanted to have them on my show, and I I hope you'll enjoy what they bring to it. We're not gonna be talking about fitness. Chris is not a fitness podcast, or we would have a very different conversation. But the more I've gotten to know them, I realize they are passionate about being good dads. They wanna be there for their kids, and that's what we're gonna be talking about today. You may not be a dad, but you may know a dad that this would be really helpful too. So I'm gonna just start off asking, Chris, I'll start with you.

James Early [00:04:13]:

What's your favorite thing about being a dad?

Chris Wilson [00:04:16]:

Oh, man. I I think there's so many great parts to it. For me, right now, when I first think of it, it's the vulnerability and curiosity of a child, and just their imaginations. There's such an innocence to kids that that gets ruined by growing up by adults. And it reminds me of a great cartoon that I saw, you know, a little cartoon clip, and I saw it the other day. It really touched me. It was a little kid kneeling down on his bed, praying, god, can you make me strong and all these attributes just like my dad? And the dad saw the little boy praying to be like his father, and then the the next clip is the father on his bed praying, God, will you make me like my son? You know, and all the wonderful attributes that that children have. And I think it was just such a great picture of the this the specialness that that kids all seem to have in in them inside them and that that the world corrupts and ruins.

Chris Wilson [00:05:38]:

And I think at the age my children are right now, 12 and 8, almost 9, they still have a lot of that in them. And fostering that and trying to keep that in them as long as possible before they get robbed of it. That's just, where I'm at right now and what I'm appreciating.

James Early [00:06:00]:

Jared, I'm gonna come to you with that same question in just a minute, but I wanna follow-up on what you just said, Chris. You remember what Jesus said about little kids? What did he say?

Chris Wilson [00:06:09]:

The little children, Jesus was always saying, you know, let them come to me. You know? I'm not sure what exactly.

James Early [00:06:17]:

Okay. There there's a couple of spots.

Chris Wilson [00:06:19]:

Yeah. Well, I wasn't sure where you were going exactly.

James Early [00:06:21]:

There was a time when parents were bringing their little kids to Jesus, and the disciples said, get away. Get away. We he doesn't have time for you.

Chris Wilson [00:06:30]:

Yeah. Get away.

James Early [00:06:31]:

And Jesus said, no. Let them come. And then he said, of such is the kingdom of heaven. That's what heaven is like. Yes. This pure innocence, childlike thought, he really treasured that. And I think that's what you're trying to share from that dad praying to help me be be more like my child.

Chris Wilson [00:06:49]:

Yeah.

James Early [00:06:49]:

So my question my follow-up question for you is, how do you try to help them hold on to the child likeness as they mature? And how can you as a parent, a dad, bring that childlike quality to being a dad?

Chris Wilson [00:07:11]:

Don't rush them to grow up. As much as we want our kids to grow up and get get more mature, right, and get past this, you should already be doing this. Right? You're this old. In some ways, yes. Like, they should know what responsibility is and those things. But, like, my my son is very artistic and does beautiful with his imagination and drawing and things. And so I go out of my way to praise him for those things and to make him feel like, wow. That it's a good accomplishment.

Chris Wilson [00:07:44]:

Dad really seems to like when I draw pictures and or or mom does. And and and my daughter, when she asks, you know, silly things or does silly things at home, with her imagination when she's creating stuff that is kind of nonsense, you know, in a way to to be okay with it, and to and to enjoy that moment, and to, support her in her crazy imagination as an 8 year old who's maybe a bit annoying at times. Right? Because we us parents can can get annoyed when an 8 year old doesn't stop talking, but I don't wanna shut it down at the same time. I I want her to keep going with that as long as as possible. And so I don't know if that's a great answer, but it's it's just trying to to praise them for all of the wonderful things that come so naturally to them in those young younger years and not rush them to get to become a grown up.

James Early [00:08:52]:

You know, you you reminded me of a story I heard, and Jared, I will get to you in just a second. I promise.

Jared Haley [00:08:57]:

Oh, you're good.

James Early [00:08:59]:

I heard a story about some some scientist, I don't remember what field of science he was in, physics or who knows what. He was a very creative, inventive type fellow, and he was getting this big award, and they asked him, well, how do you come up with all these ideas that nobody's ever thought of? And he said, well, I'll tell you. When I was a kid, one day, you know, he was, like, 5 or 6, he was trying to get a gallon jug of milk out of the refrigerator, and he dropped it, spilled all over the floor. And his mom, instead of saying, oh my gosh, you made a mess, she said, well, I can see that you spilled the milk on the floor. We're gonna have to clean this up, but before we do, let's get down in the milk and play in it and see what spilled milk is like. And so they sat down in the milk on the kitchen floor, and they splashed in it. They scooped it. They did all kinds of things, and it was this adventure.

James Early [00:09:51]:

She didn't think of it as a mistake or an accident. She thought of it as an opportunity to be creative.

Chris Wilson [00:09:56]:

Wow.

James Early [00:09:57]:

And she was always that way, and so he always learned not to be afraid to make mistake, to see what he could learn from it. Wow. And he credited his mom's approach to giving him that freedom. Yep. We're looking at things from the parent's point of view, and we're not cherishing that childlike thing. So that's kind of what I hear you saying Yeah. That happened in this guy's life. So

Chris Wilson [00:10:22]:

I'm glad you shared that because I have a lot to learn because I'm I'm like my dad. You spill milk, hung now I'm flipping out. But I I really would like to go the other way.

James Early [00:10:33]:

To be trite, there's a reason why that phrase don't cry over spilled milk came around.

Chris Wilson [00:10:38]:

That's exactly right.

James Early [00:10:40]:

So, Jared, I'm gonna come to you now. I will ask you the same question. What's your favorite thing about being a dad? Tell us how you've got 4 kids. Yep. How old are they?

Jared Haley [00:10:50]:

We have our oldest is 12, we have a 10 year old girl, and then we have twins that are 8. Okay. Yeah. So when, when our twins were born, we had 4 kids under, 3 and under. So it was, I don't even know what happened that 1st year, really, to be honest with you. It happened.

James Early [00:11:11]:

Yeah. What's your favorite thing about being a dad?

Jared Haley [00:11:14]:

So, man, one of the favorite things for me is, being able to see, especially with our our oldest as he's he's growing and developing is seeing some of the similarities, to me as well as to my wife, and being able to invest in the things that that he's excited about and the things that he's passionate about. And so, you know, when we think about, discipleship and and on our responsibility as parents, it it's beautiful that these are kids that we get to to live life with and invest in and get to teach about who God is and that we don't you know, discipleship is most difficult because of the the way that we live our lives today in our culture is that we're not around people the way that we used that they used to be. That we, we kind of we're compartmentalized in our homes and in our jobs and things along those lines. And so Mhmm. You don't have to go searching for people. We have people that live with us, and they're they're walking with us, and they're they're mimicking us all the time. And so being able to invest in them and and teach them about who God is, it's fun to, learn from them, as they're discovering God and then and discovering who God is as we read scripture and things together. It's man, it's such a joy, to get to walk with them in that.

Jared Haley [00:12:32]:

And, I'm I'm excited to see them continue to grow and see, you know, the hope is that they're gonna do even bigger and better things than than we've done ourselves. So

James Early [00:12:44]:

Yeah. That is that is so cool. I think it is important to read the Bible stories. I know as a kid, my mom and dad read Bible stories a lot. I remember when I was in about 3rd grade, I got one of these tiny little pocket Bibles. It was about 3 and a half by 4 inches.

Jared Haley [00:13:01]:
Mhmm.

James Early [00:13:01]:
It was like, something you could put in your pocket literally, but it was the whole Bible, and tiny tiny little print. But I would read the story of, it was usually in Daniel, either Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego or Daniel in the lion's den. I would read those over and over, and it made a big difference in shaping me. Mhmm. You know, my parents shared that with me, and I've tried to do that with my kids as well. So

Jared Haley [00:13:27]:
Yeah. Our kids have these comic book Bibles. I don't know if you've seen those, where they've taken the the bible and turned it into, like, a a comic book, and they really have you seen those, Chris?

Chris Wilson [00:13:40]:
I've I've seen similar thing. I've I think I have one, actually. It's like an adventure bible almost. It's, like, really Yeah. Pretty thick, but you're right.

Jared Haley [00:13:48]:
Right. Well, because it's all illustrated, and so Yes.

James Early [00:13:51]:
And so kids can relate to it.

Jared Haley [00:13:53]:
Yeah. They can. And they and they have fun with it. I mean, they read the regular Bible as well, but it's it's fun for them to see, especially the old testament, seeing these things illustrated and for them to Haley, I mean, it's all scripture. They just they illustrated it, you know. So it's really it's cool. I like it, and it's fun for them.

James Early [00:14:11]:
They didn't have that when I was a kid growing up. That would Haley been cool, you know, to have the the Bible stories like that.

Jared Haley [00:14:18]:
Mhmm.

James Early [00:14:19]:
So your kids are still not teenagers.

Jared Haley [00:14:24]:
Correct.

James Early [00:14:25]:
And so welcome to in a few years, you'll have a it'll be a very different approach to parenting.

Jared Haley [00:14:32]:

Yeah. I talk about that with my 12 year old. I tell him I say, you're not gonna get, like, you know, rebellious and stuff on me, are you? He's like, no, dad. Never.

James Early [00:14:44]:

Well, that's good to plant that seed. Can you think of any stories in the Bible of who was a good father or a bad father? Any stories come to mind? Do you have a favorite dad in the Bible?

Chris Wilson [00:14:57]:

Of course, I immediately think of the the pro the story of the prodigal son. You know, that's that's the type of father that I hope I I can become. All children are different. Right?

James Early [00:15:09]:

That's true.

Chris Wilson [00:15:10]:

And, you know, even if even if you genuinely do what you feel is good parenting, your kids might decide to go a different way. And so to honor that way as best you can while still loving them because they're yours, and then welcoming them back with open arms, should they decide to come back to you. You know, our children, we only have them really in our care for such a small portion of our lives, of their lives, that were really instrumental and influential, and then they're gonna hit that 18 year or so mark. And, I just hope that I did a good enough job that they have a desire to come back into my presence and to be part of my life, to consider me not just dad, but, you know, a dear friend. Right. Somebody you wanna be around.

James Early [00:16:09]:

Right. Let's dig into that, parable of the prodigal son just a little bit because I think a lot of Christians could use a little more of that dad's attitude. I hear some people who are very judgmental of their children who have either made choices they disagree with or have, you know, left the family completely. I have a friend in Tennessee. One of his sons won't even talk to him anymore, and they raised him in church. They tried to do everything they thought was right, and for whatever reason, I don't know the whole story, but, you know, that's heartbreaking. Yeah. What would you say to someone that is struggling with that? I had someone actually on the show, a mom, who was talking about how do you pray for your prodigal children.

James Early [00:16:56]:

You know, it's a it's a much bigger problem than I was aware of. Wow. You know, your kids are still young, but when you have friends who have kids who are older, you hear more of these stories. So I'm just curious.

Chris Wilson [00:17:08]:

Mhmm.

James Early [00:17:08]:

What would you say is there anything from the Bible you can think of to comfort someone and or help them get through that sort of situation?

Chris Wilson [00:17:16]:

Jared, anything coming to mind for you there while I process?

Jared Haley [00:17:20]:

He who started the good work will bring it through to completion. Mhmm. First one I thought of, you know, the the promise of God that when you plant that seed in them young, that the the word will not depart from them, and recognizing that, man, you see these these kids come through the same home, and one of them loves the Lord and the other one doesn't or or whatever it might be. You know? And it's not that even their home life was different. You know? And and the same thing with people growing up in terrible environments. You know? You have people that love the Lord dearly and and other ones that don't, and they had terrible home lives. So, I don't think it's necessarily, I mean, I think that we do our best. There's no guarantees with anything, but it's almost a sense of we have to trust that that the Haley Spirit's the one that that does the work and not us.

Jared Haley [00:18:10]:

We need to be faithful, to what what he asks us to do. But I can't save anybody. I can't save my kids. I pray for them, and I want the best for them. And, I try to teach them. And, hopefully, I can establish, as you were saying, Chris, a healthy relationship with them so that as they grow into adulthood, they still trust me and that they still want to engage with me in that relationship, and that I'm not you know, I I wanna give healthy boundaries, to the kids to keep them safe and protected, but at the same time, you know, they have to figure out some stuff on their own. And I think that that's part of growing up. I was thinking about the father that I was thinking of was Jethro

James Early [00:18:51]:

Oh.

Jared Haley [00:18:52]:

Moses' father-in-law. And the you know, as as as Moses was, now into leadership, of the Israelite community, and he was doing stuff wrong, and Jethro came and gave him some some sound advice about how to take care of some things. And so my hope is that as my kids get older, they would still trust me to be somebody that can give them wise advice, and that I don't completely lose them to the world. That, we've we've established the reality that I I love them and want what's best for them, and that they can have that trust that they can come to me, when no matter what's going on. Similar to the prodigal Wilson. Right? Where he he went out and he rebelled and he tried things and was like, okay. This isn't working. And now I'm gonna go home to my dad.

Jared Haley [00:19:36]:

You know? And so I wanna be able to be be that solid person that my kids always know they can come to me, and then I will love them and accept them where they're

James Early [00:19:45]:
at. Yeah.

Chris Wilson [00:19:46]:

And, yeah, similarly too that the that the kids, regardless of the choices that they've made, you know, they both should feel a proportionate or same proportionate love from you, regardless if they decided to stay and follow in your footsteps and, feel all righteous about themselves or venture off and explore the, the great beyond

Jared Haley [00:20:14]:
Mhmm.

Chris Wilson [00:20:15]:

And realize that, it's not all it's cracked up to be sometimes.

James Early [00:20:20]:

You said a couple of things, Jared, that I wanna touch on. You said, you you pray for them. I think, under whatever circumstances, so important to keep praying for your kids. I hadn't thought about Jethro as a dad, but you said father-in-law. Kind of the it's a different role of being a father.

Jared Haley [00:20:38]:
Mhmm.

James Early [00:20:39]:

He was fathering Moses. And I think Mhmm. Maybe your kids are younger right now, but you may father another grown man who needs that same kind of advice that Moses does. We think of literally father being your kids, but you can express those same qualities of mentoring, supporting Mhmm. Giving advice, giving counsel, rebuking if necessary sometimes, somebody else. And so let's sort of stretch this whole idea of being a good father to other some other relationships in some situations. I hadn't thought about that. I really appreciate that.

Jared Haley [00:21:16]:
Mhmm.

James Early [00:21:18]:

I like what you're both saying about just being there full of love and and compassion and willingness to well, how did you put it? You said, Jared, give them boundaries, safe boundaries. Mhmm. I have some friends who protected their kids so much from the world that when they went to college, it was like they felt like they had gotten out of jail. They were so free to do whatever they wanted to, and they hadn't learned to think for themselves. They hadn't learned to process things for themselves, and they didn't know how to deal with it.

Jared Haley [00:21:57]:
Yeah.

James Early [00:21:58]:

Things eventually worked out, but we've tried to let our kids like, when my oldest daughter was 14, she wanted to go on this church youth trip to Australia, and we said, well, my wife it was my wife's did all Chris. She said, well, if you can raise the money, you can go. And some of our friends thought, oh my gosh, you're gonna let her go all by herself. Well, she's with a church group. She's got chaperones.

Chris Wilson [00:22:23]:
Mhmm.

James Early [00:22:23]:
But we wanted her to have a sense of growing independence, being able to do things that were important. So she had some money in savings. She found a very creative way to to make some more money, babysitting some other stuff, and then she went. We were just so excited for her, and some of our friends fling. They were fearful the whole time. Our daughter was gone. We're like, Haley. That's great.

James Early [00:22:45]:
Yeah. And it's it's trusting them and, like you said, building up to that so you can give them more and more responsibilities. Actually Right. I put on my Facebook page, I said, hey, I'm gonna interview these guys about fatherhood from a bible basis, you know. Do you have any questions? And one person said let me see if we can find this. But it was this whole idea of setting boundaries. Oh, here it is. How do you guide your kids with healthy boundaries without stirring up resentment? Because sometimes, if if you make things too strict, they rebel.

Jared Haley [00:23:25]:
Mhmm. Yeah.

James Early [00:23:26]:
Do you have any thoughts on that? Of course, I'm asking people that haven't been through the Sure. The teenage years, but you were a teenager at one point.

Jared Haley [00:23:33]:
Yeah. Something that's big for us right now is we're asking a lot of questions. So we want we wanna help our kids develop critical thinking and being able to to process stuff, on their own and to process what what what would God say on their own. And so we have our our our set boundaries with with certain things, But then, as they wanna push those boundaries, I think that we we ask them questions about that, you know, and and try to help them come to conclusions. And then it's not just us saying do this because I say so, but they're helping develop the solution and and and that broader understanding of why that boundary exists, and recognizing helping them recognize that we're not just doing it to be mean, but we're doing it out of out of love and protection. And, obviously, there's gonna be some things that, you know, if if my 12 year old says, Haley. Can I stay out until 1 in the morning? You know? No. You know? And and, you know, and we're we're not gonna, you know, you you you don't have any leniency on that.

Jared Haley [00:24:40]:

But there are other things. If they're bringing up good points, you can say, okay. We're gonna give that to you. And I think about that growing up. Like, my parents had some strict boundaries, but then when it came to, like, how I would dress or how I would style my hair, like, they let me do whatever I wanted. And, I remember asking my mom about that. I I think in middle school, I dyed my hair blue at one point, and she she didn't care. She's like, whatever you wanna do.

Jared Haley [00:25:07]:

And I I said, why did you let me do that? And she said, there are so many other things that were far more important than what color hair you're, you know, you are you are. And so we decided to to pick our battles and and and determine, you know, what are the things that we needed to be stern on, and what are the things that we need to allow you to have freedom. And it's because of those things that I think that I I never grew up resenting my parents. I always knew that they had my best interest at heart. I knew that they loved me, and continue to do so, and I never felt like I needed to rebel.

James Early [00:25:40]:

That's awesome. That's really amazing because, not everybody can say that, either as a child or as a parent having the experience with their own kids.

Jared Haley [00:25:48]:

Mhmm.

James Early [00:25:48]:

Is there anything in the Bible, Jared, that any story that when you're helping your kids learn to be critical thinkers I mean, to use critical thinking, you know, to come to these choices that they make, are there stories in the Bible that you found helpful to illustrate a point that you talk to them about?

Jared Haley [00:26:09]:

Yeah. I mean, we talk a lot about who the Holy Spirit is and what the Holy Spirit does. And so, I mean, there's all kinds of stories, about especially, you know, in the gospels and in in the book of Acts where the early church is really reliant on on seeking God for understanding. And so a lot of times when for us, anyway, when it comes to to boundaries and different things, especially on things that aren't black and white in the Bible. You know? Should my should my kid have a phone or not? You know? Should my kid be playing this video game or not? You know, there there's nothing in the Bible that says anything about that. And so how do we handle that? And so, we bring them into that walk and say, Haley. Let let's ask God what He thinks about that. You know? You know, and and helping them process that way because we want them to have a relationship with Jesus.

Jared Haley [00:27:01]:

We don't want them to live vicariously through my relationship with Jesus. You know what I'm saying?

James Early [00:27:07]:

Right. That is so important.

Jared Haley [00:27:10]:

And so, when I think about training them to to be prepared for the world, I want it to be something where their natural instinct when they approach something is, well, what does God think about that? I want that to be what what the you know? And not because I I made it a a steadfast rule, but because they've seen it in scripture, because they've seen mom and I play it out in the way that we make our decisions, and that we've included them in that process. I'll I'll pass the ball over to Chris, maybe Chris. Chris had a few minutes now to think. So

James Early [00:27:43]:

Yeah. I'm gonna ask you the same question, Chris.

Chris Wilson [00:27:46]:

Ask it to me again, but put a spin on it.

James Early [00:27:49]:

Okay. Well, when you're with your kids and you're trying to, you know, instill in them principles for life or how to make decisions or things to do or not do, that sort of thing. When you're setting boundaries, getting them to think for themselves and not just do something because you said so as the dad. Are there stories in the Bible you use to help teach them how to come to their own conclusions, how to have a relationship with God? How do you use the Bible in helping your kids mature in their little kid ways Mhmm. To, you know, to grow so that they're not this little protected, delicate flower when they are 18 and go off to school or something, but they're mature, they're sturdy, they're strong, They have a strong foundation.

Chris Wilson [00:28:42]:

Yeah. I mean, I I I will definitely out myself there in saying that I could do a much better job of going more to the the the many great stories and parables in the bible and the the teachings of Jesus, certainly. I do reference, David, of course, as, you know, man after God's own heart. Right? As somebody that did some truly awful things and was still redeemed. I often will say, you know, if if you're a father who thinks he doesn't need to apologize to his kids for losing his cool, lose losing his temper, saying a harsh word, showing just a lack of of kindness, in a in a response, then you need to check yourself because I I fall short all the time. I think I do a fairly good job of rectifying that with my children after the fact and letting them know after I've calmer heads prevailed that, you know, in that moment, daddy made a bad choice or or said something that he doesn't feel really good about, and I want this to be the takeaway. This is what I want you to know from that. So I use those things where I've messed up as teachable moments.

Chris Wilson [00:30:10]:

And, and I think there's a lot of characters, obviously, in the bible that had similar situations. And God still extended a hand, and, they got that second chance. You know, so, I just want my kids to see me as not a a flawless, you know, perfect dad, but as a human being who messes up just like anybody else. And, you know, being apologetic and letting someone know that your relationship is means a lot more than maybe a bad moment. I think I think things like that, I think, will stick with them a lot longer and hopefully be really good lessons for them to carry with them.

James Early [00:30:58]:

How do your kids respond to you when you come to them and basically apologize?

Chris Wilson [00:31:04]:

They instantly forgive. The it's instantaneous. And sometimes they'll even say, oh, I don't even remember that. And and it might Haley just happened earlier that day.

James Early [00:31:18]:

Mhmm.

Chris Wilson [00:31:19]:

And and they'll just be like, oh, I I didn't- oh, okay. Well, thank you, or or whatever, or give you a big hug and kiss, or, you know, because you're sitting up to them anyway. Mhmm. My kids are still young enough where they they still like hugs and kisses. My son, I I'm sure fairly soon, that might not be, top of the list anymore. I hope, actually, that they continue to see me as, in the same way. Because I I think back to my own childhood, and I never really lost that longing I had to be next to my mom. I had a strained relationship with my father.

Chris Wilson [00:31:59]:

My parents divorced when I was 13, and was actually, you know, just living with my my mother and then stepfather from that point on. But, the desire I had to still be my mother's son was still very powerful even into my teenage years in high school, just to be near her, to hug her, to be in her presence and stuff. So I really don't see you know, people are always saying, oh, my you know, like, almost all kids are gonna be this way when they become teenagers. I wasn't that way. So I don't expect my kids to be that way because I don't feel like I'm it's a possibility. I feel my kids will still long to sit next to their dad and because that's the relationship I've established with them.

James Early [00:32:53]:

Right. Right. I wanna go now to some of these questions that my listeners and my Facebook friends have asked. And

Chris Wilson [00:33:01]:

Let's do it.

James Early [00:33:02]:

One is what's the biggest challenge that you have faced as a dad? Jared, we'll start with you.

Jared Haley [00:33:11]:

Our biggest challenge, I think, came this last year when our daughter was having, these crazy night terrors and panic attacks and not knowing really how how to handle them and walk with her in that. We were able to get some some counseling, and take her to a a counselor that we trust, to try to figure out what's causing these panic attacks and what's going on and how do we walk her through that in in a healthy way. And I think it was the first, time Haley that my wife and I just really felt at a at a loss that we don't know we don't know how to help her with this. And it wasn't like I mean, it it was a very interesting thing where she would, not be able to sleep

at night, and she's just terrified to go to sleep because she just feels like some like, something's attacking her coming, you know, and all of a sudden, she's having this this panic attack in the middle of the night. And so, that that was a huge challenge for us, but we did everything that we've always done. You know? The counselor that we go to has one session with our daughter, and then the rest of the sessions are with Chris and I in order to teach us how to how to parent. Like, she wants us to be the ones that are helping bring the resolution to what's going on and not her, which is really good. I mean, I Haley recommend a a good Christian counselor when you need one.

Jared Haley [00:34:36]:

Being able to to help our daughter understand where the root is of the panic attack, help her to walk through that, and help for her to to grow in her dependence on God to protect her, through these things was was a really beautiful thing. It was like a 4 to 6 month process, of of helping her walk through Chris, and now it's something that's it's it's in the past now. We don't even think about it anymore. But it was a huge challenge. And, like you said, our kids aren't teenagers, so we're gonna have more intense, challenges to come. But that was a big one. That was a big one for us to be in a place where we say we don't really know what the solution is or how to handle this and really seeking God on on what we needed to do in order to help our daughter. And to watch your kids suffer through anything is terrible.

James Early [00:35:21]:

Oh, it's hard. Yeah.

Jared Haley [00:35:23]:

I mean, it's gotta be the worst thing ever.

James Early [00:35:24]:

Totally. So Yeah.

Jared Haley [00:35:27]:

For us, that's that that was a a challenge, and we're we're grateful for for God helping us walk through that.

James Early [00:35:33]:

Was there anything in the Bible or any any prayer in particular that you found helpful in that time period?

Jared Haley [00:35:41]:

Yeah. I mean, it was all of the anything that's, like, fear not, all of the fear scriptures. You know? I mean, we pulled all of those out. You know? Fear not, for I am with you. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, you know, I will fear no evil. You know? And and our daughter, through all of that, she has become like our little scripture wizard. I mean, she she can just recite stuff. It's incredible, her memory when it comes to scripture, and she knows right where it's at.

Jared Haley [00:36:07]:

And so, that's kind of the the blessing in disguise through all of it is is her reliance on on scripture and being able to, sit. And one of the the things that was important to us is that she wasn't dependent on us to get through them, but she learned how to deal with them on her own with Jesus. And so, it's cool that she can sit in her bed and she can pray and she can recite scriptures, and and and we kept telling her over and over again, you have to be the one to do this. I cannot fix this problem for you. You have to want be the one that prays through this and and knows the scriptures and and knows how to put the, you know, the enemy in his place, you know, with with spiritual warfare and things along those lines. And so Wow. That's beautiful. It's great that she was able to learn and overcome on her own.

James Early [00:36:56]:

That is a really powerful lesson for her and for you. And you probably know this, but someone told me recently that there are 365 scriptures that say, in essence, fear not. Like, one for each day of the year. Isn't that cool?

Jared Haley [00:37:11]:

Yep. Yeah. Yeah. Because, I think I think you've said that, Chris, a couple of times. The reality that that it's like our default, is to to fall back into fear, and and fears fear drives all kinds of sin. You know? I mean, when we're trying to handle things on our own in the flesh, because we're afraid of something, man, our minds go crazy. We start doing some really nutso things.

James Early [00:37:36]:

We make mistakes. Yeah. Yeah. Totally. So, Chris, what about you? What's been one of the biggest challenges you've faced as a dad? How have you prayed about it?

Chris Wilson [00:37:49]:

Yeah. Well, I got two answers to that. One is I get my temperament from my own father, and he didn't have the best temperament. He was the oldest of 4 boys, which right there I gave I think gave him a lot of responsibility when he was younger. And he carried that into his adult life and, became a marine and an alcoholic at the same time. And so my dad, always very short fuse, very much a disciplinarian. While he did show us love, he also showed us a lot of, emotional, physical, verbal abuse to me and my brothers. And so I've carried a portion of that.

Chris Wilson [00:38:28]:

I'm I'm I'm my father's son. And so it's kind of overcoming some of those things that are just built inside of me that I grew up with, dealing with those, praying regularly to help God, walk me through those difficulties, those challenges, those emotions, and, and to show the people I love the most, my family, the love they deserve. So it's dealing with that. That that's a major challenge for me. Secondly, I'll say that the the challenge of not having either of my parents in my kids' lives. My dad died in 2,005 long before I had children, actually, the same year I got married. And then I lost my mother in 2016 when my son was only 5 and my daughter, just a year old. And so while she did get to know her 2 grandchildren from me, my kids are missing out on the wonderful woman I knew as my mother.

Chris Wilson [00:39:41]:

And I just that's I just something that still doesn't sit within me very well because I feel like

James Early [00:39:49]:
Yeah. Yeah.

Chris Wilson [00:39:51]:
Their lives would be so much better or more enriched had they been able to know my mother. Like, I knew my mom's dad, my grandfather. Right. I just have to show them as much of grandma as I can in me and, keep keep talking about her and keep her her memory very, very much alive in their lives.

James Early [00:40:19]:
Yeah. I'm curious back on your first point. Do you feel like you're making progress on your temperament as you put it? Are you pushing the needle in the right direction?

Chris Wilson [00:40:34]:
Jared, what do you think?

Jared Haley [00:40:35]:
I mean, as far as I know, yeah. The stories that I've heard are not, who you are today, so that's right.

Chris Wilson [00:40:45]:
I do think, like, I've made strides, certainly over the decades, in that, but I there's more work to do.

James Early [00:40:54]:
Well, let's talk about that because I think there are a lot of guys that they repeat the patterns if they were yelled at or or their parents lost a temperate them? They they repeat those patterns because they don't know anything else? Yeah. What could you say to encourage someone? How do we how do we surrender that to God?

Chris Wilson [00:41:15]:
Yeah. So good. It's so true To catch ourselves in the moment, first, there has to be an awareness and a desire to change. And so I am very much aware of my temperament and my my quick knee jerk reaction to just, like, reacting into something like my dad would have and did. Luckily, my wife is there to let me know and to to, to confirm my overreaction or my my response to things. And and to not then just get upset with her for saying something about it. Like, she just wants to see me improve Of course. In that capacity.

Chris Wilson [00:42:00]:
She she's on my side as a cheerleader and not an an opponent.

James Early [00:42:06]:
Has there been a time when you have felt a little victory, and you did hold your temper?

Chris Wilson [00:42:13]:

Yeah. Yeah. Oh, absolutely.

James Early [00:42:15]:
Can you gi- give me an example?

Chris Wilson [00:42:18]:
Okay. Let me try to think of something recent. There's been a lot of moments where I went to say something, and then I, I I bit my lip, bit my tongue, didn't say anything at all, and just processed that emotion. And then while looking at my kids, or looking at my spouse even, but certainly looking at my kids as if they were me in that moment, and re remembering myself at that age doing the same exact thing. Oh. And the response that my dad in that moment had for me and what that made me feel like. So it's it's trying to immediately tap into what I would Haley felt in that moment as a kid, because we can all do it. We can all go back and and remember and recall what that was like, and kids do dumb stuff.

Chris Wilson [00:43:14]:
I mean, it's how we learn, how we grow, how we

Jared Haley [00:43:17]:
you know?

Chris Wilson [00:43:17]:
And and and it's just part of being a kid. 88 years old and 12 years old, you're you're gonna do some pretty silly dumb stuff because you're not thinking of the consequences. So I think in those moments, it's just this the lack of a response is a major win for me. And and being okay with a silly thing that the kid did that ultimately isn't like, if they're not hurting themselves, I can't save them from every silly mistake or failure. Sometimes they gotta realize it themselves and let them let that real let that thing realize all by itself without you getting involved.

James Early [00:44:01]:
I I had the same struggle that you did when my kids were little. I would sometimes react. Other times, I didn't. Sometimes, I would start participating in the silliness with them, and that would totally we'd laugh, and then it'd be over. Right. So it's really like you were saying, Jared, it's being in tune with the Holy Spirit. Because when you feel your own connection with God Mhmm. Your own relationship, then you just do and say things more naturally that are godlike as opposed to, you know, human opinions or human ego or whatever.

Jared Haley [00:44:43]:
Mhmm.

James Early [00:44:43]:
And so that's kinda what I hear you saying. What what actually occurred to me while you're talking, Chris, is, you know, where Jesus talks about separating the sheep from the goats and he says, well, all you sheep, you you did this to me and you you know, you came to see me in Wilson, you did all these things for me, and they say, we never saw you. And he says, well, whenever you did it to the least of these my brethren, you did it to me, and the ones that didn't,

he said, you didn't do it to me when you didn't do anybody else. And I thought, when you said you saw yourself in your kids, what if we could see the way we're treating our kids? How would you treat Jesus

Jared Haley [00:45:19]:
Mhmm.

James Early [00:45:20]:
As a 7 year old? Wow. That's kind of a funny talk about. Let's pretend your kid Hypothetically. Yeah. Hypothetically, if that your kid was Jesus, how would you treat them if he was doing something like, oh, wow. Jesus. You know? I mean, it just gives a different perspective

Jared Haley [00:45:38]:
Yeah.

James Early [00:45:39]:
Because you would honor and respect them and know that it was gonna be okay. Right. I mean, okay. Let's talk about when Jesus was at the temple when he was 12, and he went off on his own. Okay. Here we go. Here's some parenting in the Bible. I hadn't thought about this example.

James Early [00:45:56]:
So they search for him for 3 days, and they can't find him. They said, we were looking for you. Where were you? Wilson, I was in the temple. Where else would I be? And Mary took that she didn't you don't get the sense they yelled at him. They sort of were concerned. And it was a mild little reprimand maybe, but he said, hey. It was about my father's business.

Jared Haley [00:46:20]:
Mhmm.

James Early [00:46:21]:
And Mary takes all that in and ponders it and cherishes it.

Jared Haley [00:46:26]:
Mhmm.

James Early [00:46:27]:
I think that's really powerful. Sometimes kids may be more in tune to things than we Jared, spiritually. Mhmm. Like, the dad who you're saying was praying for God to help him be more like his kid. Yeah. You know, if we could see things from their perspective.

Jared Haley [00:46:45]:
My wife and I were having this conversation just last week. So you you put it in perspective, what if it was Jesus as a 7 year old? And the question was, if these were Jesus' kids, would you treat them this way? You know? If Jesus had children. You know? And and then I start thinking of, oh, man. They're gonna go tell on me. You know? And we kinda came to the reality that as they're born of the spirit and as they have their own relationship with Jesus, they become God's

children. Right? And so it's this thing where we feel like they're only on loan to us. Really, they're God's. You know, they're Chris kids.

James Early [00:47:23]:
Exactly.

Jared Haley [00:47:24]:
They're on loan to us to to train and to teach, kinda like Jesus was for Joseph and Mary. Like like, they they raised Him, but, ultimately, He was the son of the father. And so Right. That's been big for us as we we're thinking about our kids as well is, god, these are your children, and thank you for for giving us the grace and you know? But, ultimately, they're yours. And that's hard. That's hard, especially when it comes to protecting them and letting them make their own decisions and all the things that we have to do as parents. That's that's to recognize they're not completely

James Early [00:47:58]:
ours. You know, I think that's a beautiful idea, and perhaps, I just had this thought that the best way to parent our children is to realize that God is their parent, you could say, and to understand that God is our parent as well. That the more we have our relationship with God, not just in word, but in our hearts, we understand it. We feel that that presence in our lives. That's gonna flavor everything we do as a human parent to our kids.

Jared Haley [00:48:35]:
It is. Yeah.

James Early [00:48:36]:
I think the best way we can be a parent is to understand our relation. I just said that. Be I understand our relationship to God. Yeah. Yeah. Whatever you said just made that so clear to me. Mhmm. So it seems counterintuitive.

James Early [00:48:51]:
You know, you wanna maybe you've got a challenge in your family with your kids at whatever age they are, and you think I've gotta go solve this problem. Maybe you need to work on your relationship with God first.

Jared Haley [00:49:03]:
It's it's out of the overflow. Right? It's out of the overflow that we are able to to take care of others and, you know, lead yourself first, all of those things. And I think that a big reason too that we see kids not follow through in their relationship with Jesus as they grow older is they don't see you living it it they don't see you practicing what you preach. Right?

Chris Wilson [00:49:25]:
Oh, yeah.

Jared Haley [00:49:26]:

It's a monkey see, monkey do kind of kinda deal. And so, I mean, I it's totally you can say, you're telling me to do all of these things, and yet you're doing all of these. Like, it it doesn't add up, and so God must not be real. So, I think that if we're focused on ourselves and, when we think about control, right, if I'm trying to there's not a lot of control of other other people that is healthy. Obviously, if my kid's about to run into the road, you know, that's a place where it's okay to grab them and control them so that they don't jump into a moving car.

Chris Wilson [00:50:00]:
Right.

Jared Haley [00:50:01]:
But most of the time, control over another human being is a form of manipulation or it's, you know, it's not a healthy deal. And so the person that I can control in a healthy way all the time is myself. And so, I I just think that that's such an important point, and I just wanted to reemphasize the the reality that if I'm not focusing if I'm not working on my own relationship with Jesus, how can I ever expect my kids to have a relationship with him?

James Early [00:50:30]:
Oh, that puts it that puts it plain and simple, doesn't it? Wilson, we could go on and on here, but I wanna kinda start to wrap things up here. Is there anything that you'd like to sort of leave my listeners with, either something you wanna reemphasize or something we didn't even talk about that's been helpful to you as a parent? Chris, I'm gonna start with you.

Chris Wilson [00:50:54]:
There was something that that occurred to me, while Jared was answering, and this is something I think I know I could do better at, is is when we when we see our children, to think of them in that day, in that moment as as if it was the 1st day or the last day to have them in your presence, and how much different we would approach that moment, that day. Because, you know, the days, we just are always counting on tomorrow, aren't we? And so we can get wrapped up and lost in the stress of life and the busyness of life, and, don't always give people our best. But if if the day that we had or the time that we had with our loved ones was fleeting, if we just were living in that moment as if it it we it couldn't be repeated and we wouldn't have that moment again. How much different we would we would respond to them in love and and appreciation. And I think it's just, gratitude, which is one of our core values here at Critical Bench. We have 7 core values, and gratitude's one of them. And I think just seeing others as a blessing, it absolutely starts with your spouse and your children. And seeing them for the blessing that they are regardless of their flaws, the mistakes Yeah.

Chris Wilson [00:52:23]:
The issue, the situation that you find yourself Wilson, and constantly just reminding yourself of that.

James Early [00:52:29]:
Yeah. I love that. Jared, how about you? Anything you wanna leave my listeners with?

Jared Haley [00:52:36]:

Yeah. I was thinking about the old cliché of the days are long, but the years are short. And recognizing that they're here and they're gone. You know? Really, the the final piece for me is, you know, Jesus says, the great commission. I feel like we we kinda opened up with that a little bit of, you know, go and make disciples, you know, as you go. You know, make disciples. And the reality is that, we are called to go and make disciples. And when you have kids, you don't even have to look for them.

Jared Haley [00:53:09]:

They're there. You know, it's training people. It's training somebody to to follow Jesus. And that's what we're called to do as as dads, specifically, is is really take that command seriously and to be very intentional about it and to to do our best to invest in our kids' lives so that they can grow up and and and know know Jesus and, be a be a part of the kingdom.

James Early [00:53:33]:

Yeah. I wanna honor both of you. I really have loved getting to know you guys over the last couple of months. I just appreciate everything you're doing to help people be all that they can be, and, you know, everybody's got their own little approach to that, but I appreciate what you're doing. What's the best way for people to connect

Jared Haley [00:53:54]:

with you? I mean, you can always check out, the podcast, Strong by Design Podcast. You can go to, our website, strong by design podcast.com. You know, you can email jaredorChris@strongbydesignpodcast.com. Chris mean, if you wanna email us directly, you can look me up. I'm on Facebook and Instagram personally at Jared, j a r e d s a r I a. And aria is a solo and an opera, and so I thought I was clever in college, and I've always had Jared's Aria.

James Early [00:54:25]:

I I like that.

Jared Haley [00:54:26]:

Yeah. I know I know Chris is on on the socials as well. So, and and the podcast is on all social places and and on YouTube as well. But, Chris, I'll let you let people know how to connect with you.

Chris Wilson [00:54:38]:

Yeah. All those, Strong by Design platforms are great, certainly. And, me personally, Instagram is a good spot if you're trying to get a Haley of me directly, at [coach_Chris Wilson](#) on Instagram.

James Early [00:54:57]:

Well, I'll have those links in the show notes so people, can check that out.

Chris Wilson [00:55:01]:

Great.

James Early [00:55:01]:

And, That's great. I always ask my guests three final questions. I'll ask question 1 to each of you, then we'll go to question 2, and we'll go to question 3. So I'm gonna start this time with Chris. Chris, if you could talk to any bible character other than Jesus, who would it be and what would you ask them?

Chris Wilson [00:55:23]:

I would talk I mean, this is the first one that popped in my head. Ready? That's what I want. Okay. I talked to Shamgar, who was a farmer who defended himself and killed 600 Philistines. And I would ask him how the heck did he do that with an ox goad. Okay. He's referencing the Bible, and he sounds like he's a pretty tough dude. And I I like tough dudes, So I'd wanna ask him how the heck did he do that.

James Early [00:55:56]:

Alright. That's great. Nobody has ever said that before. I don't even know this guy.

Chris Wilson [00:56:00]:

I knew no one has ever said Shamgar No. On your podcast.

James Early [00:56:05]:

I'm gonna have to look up Shamgar. So, Jared, if you could talk to anybody in the bible other than Jesus, who would it be, and what would you ask them?

Jared Haley [00:56:15]:

So my my answer is a double cheat because I just got Chris asked this question on another podcast that I was on. Oh. And, so that the first cheat is because I've already had a chance to think about it. The second cheat is there's a few different people that I would really like to talk to, and Moses and Elijah are 2 of them. And so I decided that I just wanted to go with James, Peter, and John as they went up the mountain and Jesus had the transfiguration. And that way

James Early [00:56:43]:

You get them all at once.

Jared Haley [00:56:45]:

I can hit them all at once, and but I'm really curious. What did you what are you guys talking about? I I think that would be my first question, in that circle is, hey, guys. What are we what are we talking about here? What's going on?

James Early [00:56:57]:

That is a great thought. Okay. So question number 2 and, Jared, you get to go first this time.

Jared Haley [00:57:05]:

Okay.

James Early [00:57:05]:

Is there any bible character who you especially identify with?

Jared Haley [00:57:10]:

Yeah. Someone that I really have always, identified with for whatever reason is just John, the disciple. Just the way that he writes, and he just seems like somebody that that we we would connect really, really well.

James Early [00:57:28]:

Chris, what Bible character do you identify with?

Chris Wilson [00:57:32]:

That's a good one. Probably Peter. Why is that? Peter was a tough guy, fisherman, you know, didn't always make the greatest choices, but he loved walking with Jesus, and he would do anything for him. Yeah. He was always looking to protect Jesus too.

James Early [00:57:53]:

Yeah. I like that. So here's the third question. The Bible Speaks To You podcast is about getting back to the original teachings, the original Christianity of Jesus, not all the stuff we've added in the last 2000 years, how would you describe Jesus' original message of how he wanted us to live our lives? And, Chris, I'm gonna start with you.

Chris Wilson [00:58:22]:

Oh, I mean, come on. In the words of Danny Gokey, love God, love people. The greatest of I mean, there are 10 commandments. Right? But there's 2 right at the in the beginning. It's the cross, man. 1st, you gotta look up, and then you can look sideways. So you gotta look up and love God with all your heart and your mind and your soul. And then you gotta look at others, the way God looks at them and just love on people as much as as possible.

Chris Wilson [00:58:54]:

And I think we all can do a better job at that, and I know I can.

James Early [00:58:58]:

Great. I love that answer. How about you, Jared?

Jared Haley [00:59:02]:

I think this is an unfair question.

Chris Wilson [00:59:07]:

Whatever you say won't be as good as that.

Jared Haley [00:59:10]:

I think it's unfair because it's at the end of your podcast, and that's, like, a whole talk a whole podcast right there. The question is, what, how do we live the way that Jesus wanted us to live?

James Early [00:59:21]:

Yeah. How would you describe I mean, that was his message, Haley. Like, Chris summed it up. Mhmm.

Chris Wilson [00:59:28]:
What

James Early [00:59:28]:
does that mean to you? Let's ask it that way.

Jared Haley [00:59:31]:
I'll just give you the first thing that jumps out of my mind is the reality of having healthy rhythms, and looking at Jesus and the way that he lived his life in healthy rhythms.

Chris Wilson [00:59:44]:
Oh.

Jared Haley [00:59:45]:
He spent time ministering to others. Let me back up. Number 1 in the in the in the in the wheel of the circular wheel that he he does, number 1 is just getting alone and being with his father. So really developing that relationship 1 on 1 with his father. Then from there, He would typically spend time with His buddies, His friends, the disciples, the apostles. So, whether that's the whole group or just a couple of them, there's a lot about being in community with other people who are on the same journey you are. And then the 3rd piece is in ministry, loving and serving others. And so that was Jesus' rhythm.

Jared Haley [01:00:23]:
He was always in this rhythm of, ministering to others, spending time alone with his father, and then hanging out with his dudes. You know? And so I think that, when it comes to us and the way that we live our lives, we need to follow that same rhythm.

James Early [01:00:36]:
I love that. If finding the right balance because sometimes we might do those three things, but or we leave one out.

Jared Haley [01:00:42]:
Mhmm.

James Early [01:00:42]:
If you don't have the right balance, things go go haywire. Mhmm. Wow. I love that. I wanna thank you guys so much for being here today. I've really enjoyed this. And to everybody listening, I hope you've enjoyed this, gotten some insights. You can take these ideas into any kind of relationship you have at work, you know, at church, but especially in your families.

James Early [01:01:05]:
And even if you're a mom or a grandmother, there are a lot of ideas here I hope you found helpful. So thanks again, guys, for being here. It's been a real pleasure.

Jared Haley [01:01:15]:
Thank you.

Chris Wilson [01:01:16]:
Same here. Thank you, James.