

## **BCL ep314 Why Every Child Needs the Power of a Blessing with John Trent**

As we navigate adulthood, we often find ourselves reflecting on the people who shaped us most, the parents, teachers, and friends who left indelible marks on our lives. At the heart of every human experience is a longing for unconditional love, genuine affirmation, and steadfast support. And true wisdom thrives in places where trust runs deep and a profound sense of belonging anchors us, which is why I'm so grateful for the intentional efforts that you make in your homes and in classical Christian schools.

With over a million copies of his book in print, our guest today has touched countless lives by unpacking the transformative power of blessing. Join us as we dive into his insights and uncover how these timeless truths can shape our homes and schools on this episode of Base Camp Live. Mountains, we all face them as we seek to influence the next generation.

Get equipped to conquer the challenges, summit the peak, and shape exceptionally thoughtful, compassionate, and flourishing human beings. We call it ancient future education for raising the next generation. Welcome to Base Camp Live.

Now your host, Davies Owens. Welcome to another episode of Base Camp Live. Davies Owens here, grateful as always that you've taken time to listen on the go to this podcast that we're now in our eighth year.

I can't believe it's year 2025. I don't know what that says about how much older we're all getting, but hopefully there's some wisdom in all of that. For sure what it means is that the children that were once in grammar school are now moving into middle school, high school, and out into life, which is actually how God designed it, which is why we're here, because we want to help them on that journey into adulthood and beyond.

Again, thanks for being here in Base Camp Live. I always love to hear from any of you and what's on your mind. In this particular episode, I'm just more grateful than ever for the partnerships and friendships that are around the country.

A special shout out in this episode to Teresa Frazier, head of school at Summit Classical Academy. They're in Broomfield, Colorado, as well as to Brad Dalloff, Dean at the School of the Ozarks in Point Lookout, Missouri, where I've had the joy of getting to go and visit. So shout out to both you, of you, Teresa and Brad, as well as to your team.

Thanks for being a part of the Base Camp Live community and the Zipcast community. We're so, so grateful for your partnerships. In this particular episode, I want to say as well a thank you to our sponsors who provide great resources for all of us on this continued journey, whether we're in a school or in a home, Classical Academic Press, Gordon College, the Classic Learning Test, and Wilson Hill Academy are great partners and supporters of what we do.

So thank you for all you're doing. And also just a special update on Zipcast, which continues to be a great blessing to schools around the country, providing a really fresh and effective communication platform to reach out to families. Zipcast 2.0 is behind the scenes being worked on.

We're going to be announcing a lot more about that, a lot of features, a lot of updates, a lot of improvements in the way we connect with even better programming, which is coming here very soon. So a lot of exciting things to share with you. This particular episode, I have the privilege of sitting down with John Trent.

He is a noted speaker, an author, president of Strong Families. He and Gary Smalley have won the Gold Medallion Award for writing, including their book, *The Blessing*, which I don't know about you, but because there's more than a million of them that were printed, I do have a copy of *The Blessing*. I've had it for years on my shelf, as well as other books that he's written, *The Two Sides of Love*.

He has written children's books in addition to all of that, and he maintains a private practice. He teaches clinical mental health to counselors at Phoenix Seminary, as well as doctoral students in marriage and family at Dallas Theological Seminary, and I'm so grateful for this conversation with him. I think you'll be encouraged as well, and so without further ado, here's my conversation with Dr. John Trent.

Dr. John Trent, welcome to Base Camp Live. Hey Davey, it's great to be with you. Thank you.

It's a joy to have you here. I have, probably like many people, had a copy of the book that you and Gary Smalley wrote years ago called *The Blessing* on my bookshelf, and I'm just so excited to get to connect with you and hear a little bit of the great work that you've been doing for decades now to impact marriages and families. So welcome, and thanks again for being a part of this.

Great. It's an honor. Thank you.

So 1986 was when you wrote *The Blessing*, and I remember that year well, and I won't tell everybody what I was doing back then, but let's just say I was somewhere between high school and college, and the world was a different place. I missed the 80s and its simplicity. Oh, yeah.

No, absolutely. So much has changed. Now, of course, the book *The Blessing* has been revised and updated a number of times, but if you think about it, just in my lifetime, I started off, I grew up in a single parent home.

My mom and dad divorced when I was two months old. I never met my dad until right like you at the end of high, well, not like you, but right at the end of high school at 1986. But the thing that really, I think, shows culturally where things were at was my older brother and my twin brother and I went to a really large grade school in just second or grade school in Arizona.

Okay. Well, we were the only kids, think about this, we were the only kids in our grade school that were from a single parent family by divorce. Now, there was one other girl whose dad had died in a car wreck, but we were the only kids.

Now, I'm older than you. This is the 50s and 60s. Now, my wife is a teacher, her last class, Davies.

Okay. So, it went from that, from we were the anomaly to this, her last semester, there were 22 kids in her class, 18 were from single parent or blended families. Wow.

So, that's what I'm getting at. You know, the hills that kids are climbing, I mean, I used to be the anomaly. Now, it's the norm.

Well, you know, it's funny as you're saying, I'm thinking about like the Brady Bunch is probably kind of this intriguing idea that no one had thought of back in the day. Let's make a whole TV series about families that joined together that have never, you know, wow, today, you're right. We're in such a different world with so many different pressures, but we're still humans, still have these needs.

Yeah. And you have such a great vantage point because of the work you continue to do with marriage and the work of marriage and family and obviously teaching. And so, yeah, just continue to share what you're, you just, you've seen a lot of things change.

And I'm just curious, what are some of those more, you know, more acute pressure points you're seeing today? Well, you know, the interesting thing is kids today, just like, you know, when I was growing up, just like you in the eighties, kids today are still climbing huge hills. Okay. Now, you know, some of them are identity and gender and the realities of, of fear and anxiety that has just been, you know, rampant.

Is there going to be a future, you know, that, that kind of existential idea. But it's really interesting. I think there's a, there was a study at UVA.

Have you ever been to university of Virginia? Very beautiful campus. Love their campus. Yeah.

Well, right at the edge of campus, there's this high hill. They just, you know, it's big. Now it's not a mountain, but it kind of looks like this.

So there was a guy named profit and he was looking at cognitive research. So this is just how do people think the decisions they make. Okay.

So it wasn't a Christian study. It wasn't a study on relationships that what they were looking for was they would grab people walking by themselves, Davies. Okay.

So here you are on campus. They go, Hey you want to be in a clinical study? Here's a pass. You can skip class.

And so who doesn't want to in college when it's being a clinical study. So what they do is they'd stand somebody that put a 60 pound backpack on him. Now that's stout.

Okay. Army Rangers, you run around in Ranger school with a 65 pound backpack everywhere. So this is a heavy pack.

So you put on a heavy pack that wire you up and you stood there and you looked up and said, how high is the hill? How hard is it going to climb? Is it to climb in every one of them? Okay. That, that were standing there that were by themselves. Everyone overshoot the hill was going to be harder and it was going to take more effort to climb.

All right. So now what they did was the, they were looking for couples. Now these could be two roommates.

These could be somebody dating. Hey, you two, you two roommates are what you know each other. Oh yeah.

We're roommates. We're pretty close. So you're pretty close.

Yeah. All right. Well, do me a favor.

You want to be in a study? So wire up one of them, but here's what they do. So the other one, so you're, you've got the backpack, you're going up. Okay.

But now the difference is the other kid in the study would put their hand on their shoulder because they're going up the hill with you. And then guess what happened? Yeah. It's an Aaron and Moses moment, I think.

And in every case the hill shrunk. Yeah. Okay.

And it took, and of course, you know, this has been replicated now several times. University of London, what they did was they said, they didn't even add another person. They said, who, do you know somebody in your life? Who's somebody that would be standing here that would have their hand on their shoulder? And just the thought of that.

So here's what I'm getting at, you know, as we get started. Yes, absolutely. Some of the challenges is faced, but the kids are still facing that hill.

And what they really need is somebody now today it's called attachment theory. And so we'll kind of focus on that. Biblically it's called the blessing, but there's that deep sense when kids really grow up with a deep sense that you're going up the hill with them.

That makes all the difference in the world. It makes, it makes a lot of, I mean, we're, we're communal beings. And, you know, I remember years ago, the book *bowling alone*, I mean, just years ago where the, the thought of being lonely in a crowd, I mean, these are such anomalies to human civilization.

We've always been communal beings and Biblically you're right. So, but talk more about that. Cause it's, it's, it's more than just families are not as intact.

Obviously that contributes to that sense of not having that connection, but what else are you seeing is contributing? I'm sure technology plays a part of it today for sure in terms of isolating people. Yeah, no, it is. Basically there's that sense of disconnection that comes certainly, or can come and often does through just unbridled technology.

But, you know, really and truly the interesting thing that keeps showing up in study after study today is that deep need that we have for guess what? A parent to really be connected with a child. Okay. There's an amazing study that just came out literally just was, it's, it's been in process for a good long time, but Gallup poll and Baylor university together did a study called the flourishing study.

And what they were looking at was think about this 21 countries. Okay. So this all over the globe, 210,000 people in their study.

Now my doctoral program, I had 60 people in my doctoral study. I don't know how many you had in your 35 or 40 is that's a lot. Think about 210,000 people.

So what they discovered was they were looking at this specific. They wanted to know, all right, kids that are flourishing today. So they grew up and now as adults, they're flourishing across the board.

What is it that causes flourishing? Okay. Now this cut across social economic, it cut across racial countries, you know, whole, whole deal education. But, but right at the core, there were two things.

Number one was kids that tended to do be more successful, had parents that were deeply committed and loved them. Okay. And then the second thing is they were religious parents.

So there's faith again, you know there's, there's attachment again. And so whether it's that person with their hand on your shoulder whether it's looking cross culturally man, we are right at the heart of what we, you know, need to be doing, I think with kids. And of course you're, you're preaching to the choir in some ways here to parents that are very engaged in saying, let's make, you know, their educational experience as good as it can be, which is awesome, which is great.

And they're very engaged in that. But in part, you know, it's also, well then in the process of that, guess what kid could even be just as important as that relationship that they have, that they build with them, not just giving them the opportunity to succeed, but relationally really, really creating that bond. It makes a lot of sense, John.

Like, you know, I wonder, you know, two thoughts as you were sharing that one is, you know, in the, in the proverbial, the two ditches to fall into, I think maybe in prior generations, you had

kind of that stiff upper lip kind of boomer, you know, dad who fought in the war who, you know, kids are out of sight, out of mind, very kind of emotionally detached. You had those issues. And it seems like today the pendulum is in this other ditch where some cases, and I think some parents were listening going, absolutely.

We want to be, you know, caring for their deepest needs and, and, and, and, you know, meeting them in this very emotional way. That other ditch then becomes one of almost indulging them, you know, and I, and I think there's a sense, I think, I think perhaps even more acutely within our classical Christian world of we, we need to have some healthy distance from kind of emotion and feeling because that's, that's where the world gets. So everybody's having trigger moments and everything's about feeling.

So how do you, how do you balance that? Because it seems like you fall in either ditch. Oh, no, absolutely. And what, you know, right in the middle, you know, comes, I've mentioned before this concept of the blessing, I think, because when a parent would bless a child, you know, there was part of it is that relational attachment that really comes through caring and connection, but then guess what? That connection is what really opens you up then for your kid to, to have the safety and the deep sense of, well, man, I, I am loved so I can go out now and do great things.

And, and it means I'm going to fall down resilient, you know, need, you're giving them resilience. Let me give you a quick example if I could. So again, you know, I didn't grow up in a Christian home, I'm ashamed to say, and, but I had a, and I hadn't met my dad, but my mom was just phenomenal at building that attachment.

So, you know, it's three in the morning, my twin brother and I had snuck out of the house. My mom was a rheumatoid arthritic, had a lot of health things. So she'd take a ton of medicine and we just could leave with impunity because there was nobody.

She, she was just so deeply asleep. Well, the cops bring us home. We've been doing some things we shouldn't have done.

And there's, you know, not, back then they would take you home and yell at you on the porch. Okay. They wouldn't, you know, so it didn't, didn't drag us to jail, but they knocked, you know, so they're beating on the door.

My mom finally staggers down the hallway and I'll never forget, you know, my twin brother and I, and Jeff, you know, is a wonderful, brilliant MD, PhD, my twin brother. We're fraternal, I can brag on him, you know, but he was always, he's also more quiet a little bit than I am, even though we're twins. So we sit down at the table and after the cops have done yelling with us and we're sitting there at three in the morning and, you know, and I remember after about two minutes, Jeff would have waited all, all night before he said anything.

Okay. But after about three minutes, I'm, I can't take it anymore. I can't take the silence.

And so I go, well, mom, I guess this means you don't love us anymore. Oh no. And I will never forget her head snaps up.

She had these beautiful blue kind of unique blue gunmetal blue eyes. And she, she goes, this has nothing to do with love. I will always love you, but I am tremendously disappointed in you.

Okay. And right there, I knew two things. Okay.

I can show up at three in the morning with the cops, you know, dropped off. And number one is that attachment isn't going anywhere. Okay.

But I also knew we were going to be grounded. And do you see, you know, there was this sense of now that's, what's called an attachment moment. Now, later on, I'd have that with the Lord, you know, I'd realize, man, you know, Hebrews 13, five for he himself have said, I will never leave you nor forsake you.

But what's interesting is like in the book of Ephesians, they take three chapters, you know, Paul does to unpack, here's who you are, you know, you're chosen, you're, you know, secure, you're, you know, all that stuff. So for parents are going, oh, well, you know, forget the soft side. No, you absolutely need the attachment piece.

But now doctrinally, Ephesians four to six is, okay, so now go out and live it out. So that's what's so great about what we're taught, I think about the blessing is you need the soft side, but then that frees them to go out, but they're going to be imperfect. So when they fall down, that allows you to stay connected, that kind of, well, that's, that's a great description.

The story, I think really encapsulates that John very well. And you're right. I think a lot of it has to do with our personalities and just the way we were brought up and how we, but both of those, I think almost like you're describing, like if you had a dashboard on your car, you got to make sure you've got both of those going at the same time.

You don't just, it's kind of the, you know, I think often I come back to the simple description. I remember learning it when I was at LaBrie Fellowship years ago, the idea of God's holy and God is love. And typically you get people, whether it's denominationally or theologically, they fall on the either they overdo one or the other.

They're either hyper-holy, pietistic, you know, fundamentalism, or you get the, you know, squishy love, social gospel, you know, and then like, it's both, both these things have to hold each other in balance. So why don't we take a quick break? I want to come back and hear more about this idea of, of the blessing and just how we really find practical ways to live out this very important balancing act that we need to be doing in our families. We'll be right back with Dr. John Trent.

Hi, this is Dr. Christopher Perrin with Classical Academic Press. Grammar is a critical tool for a student's development that enables them to write, read, and speak with clarity, brevity, and

precision. The well-ordered language series from Classical Academic Press is designed for grades three through seven, and it will kindle the curiosity of students to learn and understand the structure of language, how it works, enabling them to order and enjoy language, all language.

Visit [classicalacademicpress.com](http://classicalacademicpress.com) and use the discount code BASECAMP live to save 20% off your next purchase. Well, John, the idea of the blessing is a very powerful idea. I had the privilege years ago of working as an associate pastor at a church in Durham, North Carolina, and the senior pastor Alan Wright, who's now continuing to, in church world and written many books, he really, he often would preach on this idea of blessing, which was kind of not something I heard growing up and kind of helped frame this idea.

This is really, certainly the Old Testament, you see it happening all the time. And so he challenged me even as a young dad to, which I did, was with all three of our kids going in pretty much every evening that I could and put my hand on them and pray a blessing over them. And I feel like it became a really significant part of my parenting.

Help us understand blessing because it's just something that's got so much, it's easy just to maybe think lightly of it, but it's deep when you really understand it. Oh, yeah. I mean, well, you know, a long time ago, you would hear pastoral blessings, you'd hear things like that.

You know, today, it's, you know, somebody thinks, what did you, you know, you just sneezed, you know, there isn't that sense of any kind of religiosity to it. But really what it was, you know, the word in Hebrew, I was a Greek major at Dallas Seminary because I got some bad advice and majored in Greek. Just kidding.

Seems like you turned out okay, by the way. Yeah. But back then, if you majored in Greek, you automatically had to minor in Hebrew.

So that was a great four years of really digging into the languages. But the word bless, literally the first aspect, now, this is what we just talked about earlier, is to bow the knee. Okay.

So it's used literally of a camel that if you, you know, they were made to get down on their knees so you could get up on their back. So it's that picture of, oh, my gosh, here's somebody that's so valuable. So it begins with an attitude.

Okay. But then guess what? It's an action. Okay.

Now, you know this because you studied Hebrew. Hebrew is a triconsonantal base, meaning there's basically almost every Hebrew word has three consonants and then underneath it are vowel points. That's how you kind of tell the difference.

Well, the same three letters that make the word blessing are the same three letters that make the word honor. So when you blessing and honor, well, guess what that means? Okay. That means to add a coin to a scale.



So back in biblical times, you didn't just, you know, hand somebody a quarter. You might hand them a coin that had somebody's visage on it. But what would you do? You'd put it in a scale, right? So the greater the weight, the more the value.

And so what it's the picture of, it's so many Hebrew words have word pictures. So because you're so valuable, you know, you bow the knee because you have such great value. I want to add to your life, like adding a coin.

That's an action. Do you see what I'm getting at? So it's that both sides that we talked about earlier. And so we can get real specific.

I think it might be helpful because people say, okay, well, what is he talking about? Because it isn't just blessing people when they sneeze, which is probably a whole nother story and where that came from. Probably during the plague or something like you need to be blessed. So I don't get whatever you just let out there, but yeah.

Yeah. Carry on. What does it look like? Well, okay.

So when you walked into your kid's room, okay. And before they went to bed, you know, you take that it, there were five things. Every time a blessing was given in the old Testament, there were five things and watch how practical this is, you know? And again, think if you're driving to school with a, or if you have younger kids or even older kids, just stay with us for just a minute.

All right. So here's number one is appropriate, meaningful touch. Okay.

So did you grow up in a home Davies where there was that, you know, hug, handshake, you know, hand on your shoulder? I think for the most part I did. I mean, I did my parents' divorce when I was 13. I don't think I had the best of that with my dad, but, but you know, I had a great mom who I think did the best she could, but so, but I, yeah.

Well, and you know, I mean, with us three boys, we didn't grow up in a Christian home. My mom would, would make us hug her before we went to school. Every year, you know, we made her drop us, hug, you know, she'd drop us off at school.

So every year we made her drop us off further and further from school, but then we'd get out of the car and we had to hug her, but we didn't want anybody to see it, you know? And there was that sense in which, you know, you go, well, wait a minute, the kids, does that really matter anymore? Oh my gosh, it's so important. And we could go into tons of clinical things, but just think about even for older kids, you know, there's that, you know, it might just be, you know, a pat on the back or touching their elbow is the safest place in clinical studies to tap somebody on their elbow, you know, but there's that appropriate touch. And then the second thing is, is think about, well, what are you saying to them? Okay.

And boy, this is so important because just for, it's called spoken message, you know, there's so many people that grow up and they know that they're loved, but they never heard it. Well, you

were probably loved, but you never got the blessing. You see what I'm getting at? So what it is, is it's, you know, you want to take that time to say it.

Well, what do you say? Well, words that attach high value. Okay. Words that help them see what's a gift or a strength or an ability.

What's something God's put inside them. Every time a blessing was given in the old Testament, they would pick out a character trait, Genesis 27, Genesis 48, Genesis 49. There, there was, you know, parents, grandparents, but they would pick out a character trait.

So who's your oldest kid? Um, Hannah. Okay. So let's just say you like Hannah the best.

No, I'm just kidding. You like all your kids. She's my one girl.

So yes, I like her. Okay. But she's very special.

She's your oldest. She's your daughter. What's a character trait? You're with her tonight and she's older right now.

Yeah. She's, she's my oldest. So yeah.

What would be, if you could, you know, Hey, um, FaceTime me or, you know, you get to see her in person the next time. Hey, I want to, I want to tell you something. Um, I just was thinking about you and what's a character trait that you would share with her.

Something God's put in her life that you see. She may not get it yet. Uh, maybe she does by 20, but I mean.

Well, yeah, she's 26. Yeah. She's married three years.

She's, you know, there's so many things, John, and you're right. Sometimes you just don't think to say them because does maybe feel like an appropriate moment, but I mean, clearly with her, there's, you know, she's got a wonderful disposition. She's joyful.

She she's very people oriented. She's an amazing business mind. I mean, I love that she's helping us with the zip, zip cast, um, uh, world that we're in and, you know, her business development and marketing.

I mean, it's just like, wow, it's amazing to see your children excel beyond you. And I think most of our, many of our parents are listening, have children in classical Christian schools. And you think, boy, you're doing things in eighth grade.

I didn't do my senior year. It's amazing what our children do. So here's what I'm getting, you know, just put your hand on there and say, hang on just one second.

You put your hand on their shoulder, Hannah, you know, I just want you to stop for just a second. Look me in the eye. Okay.

Um, I had a coach, the, I didn't know he was a Christian at the time. I just knew he made me take a lap all the time because every time he cussed and with him, he had to take a lap. He was never in better shape in my life than with him, but he would put his hand on both of my shoulder pads and he'd pull, you know, and he goes, look at me.

And, and, and I talked to him and I, I mean, he was the first person I'm telling you, you can go a decade without really looking at your spouse. Okay. I have a friend that's a neurobiologist and, um, with couples, he'll make the couples look at each other eye to eye for three minutes, three minutes.

If you don't think that's a long time, I wrestled in college. It's forever three minutes. And in three minutes, just staring into their eyes, it goes, it resets that relationship.

So you don't have to do that for three minutes with, you know, with Hannah. Okay. But your panic, put your hand on your shoulder, look at her, you know, and then say, I just want you to know, you know, how unbelievably creative that idea was you came up with today.

We've got a big presentation coming up and you pulled something out of nowhere. And do you realize how rare that is? And I just want you to know you're, you know, God put that ability there and it's, it's, I'm just thrilled to be a part of it. Great example, John.

Well, all of a sudden what you've done is number four is special future. You help her realize, oh my gosh, somebody's crazy about me. Every kid in every home deserves to have at least one person that's crazy about them.

Okay. So yeah, you sit there and you go, well, I'm not gonna, you know, nah, it's the soft side, soft skills. Hey, I'm telling you, ask, I do a ton with the military.

And I have every one of these guys and gals, you know, before they know, this was a lot was before they were being deployed and they were going home and, you know, and, you know, you need to give them a blessing before you walk out the door. And so you don't know anymore, you know, so just, just look at the fires, look at life. So, and then the last one's genuine commitment that they know that that doesn't mean, you know, you don't discipline.

That doesn't mean that, you know, you can't, the genuine commitment isn't a free ride. It's a commitment like my mom that, uh, Hey, this has nothing to do with love. I'll always love you, but I'm tremendously disappointed in that kind of a thing.

Yeah. It reminds you just the old idea of, you know, who's got my back. I mean, the Delta force guys are going in, who's got my back.

I mean, it's, it's what you're talking about. You can take on anything in the world. If you know that you are truly loved and you're a part of something greater than yourself.

I want to, I want to take another quick break and come back again. Trying to, one question is

you're talking about this again. I could imagine, um, someone being curious, a lot of the kind of failed initiatives with, with young people over the years have been things like the self-esteem movement, which was very popular a few years ago, which how do you, we'll take a break.

I want to get your answer on this, but sort of differentiating between, are we talking about just building up their self-esteem or are we talking about something much deeper, which I know we are. So let's come back and love to hear your thoughts on that. Take a quick break.

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Explore CLT's assessments by visiting [www.cltxam.com/forward/slash/Base Camp](http://www.cltxam.com/forward/slash/Base%20Camp). John, help us think about the difference in the power of a biblical blessing over what I think kind of the world has tried and maybe failed at is his self-esteem, just, you know, maybe more just, you know, light encouragement. I don't know.

How do you see this being different? Yeah, well, you know, it's interesting. First Corinthians says, now God has placed us, each one of us in the body just as he desired. That word placed is a hapax legamina, which you know, because again, you're a seminary guy, it's used one time in the New Testament.

So then you have to go to the Old Testament to figure out what it means, right? Because there's only one example. You can't look up another verse. The word placed.

Okay, well, it's only used one time in the Old Testament. Guess where it's used? It's used in the ephod. Okay, so remember Raiders of the Lost Ark, you know, the bad guy, Belark puts on the, you know, the breastplate, he dresses up like the high priest because he's going to open the covenant, right? Well, the ephod was that there were precious stones placed in the shoulder pads of that ephod.

And what I'm getting at is that it's a jeweler's term. It's saying, man, this is specific. I think what self esteem tries to do is, is going, Oh, you're great.

You're awesome. But in biblically, they would like I said, what is it? What's a character trait? What's something you see God has placed in that person? And, and you're really just helping them see that Almighty God, you know what, I wouldn't be surprised if the Lord used you that

special future. And then you know what, I'm going to be there.

You've got boy, you, man, the way that you just picked up the piano, well, I'm going to provide the lessons for you. That's the genuine commitment. You know, you're going to do that.

So it's very different, I think, than just, you know, blanket. But, but it's, it's a, it's a way of somebody looking at you and saying, man, here's something in your life that I think God put there. And that just, just is awesome.

You know, remind years ago doing youth ministry, there was an exercise. I'm sure you've done this before where, you know, if you're a group of eight, 10 people and you have a note card with each person's name on it, you just kind of pass it to your right and you write down, what do you see is, is, is something that God's gifted or strength or something unique about that person whose name is on the card and you pass around. Then when you get done, it's like, wow, I've got 10 comments that probably would have never been spoken in just normal life of people going, really? You think I have that gift? Or you see this strength or this attribute? I mean, again, sometimes it just takes some intentionality.

John is kind of shifting gears a little bit. Obviously the world that Base Camp Live speaks into is, is that of home, but also school. And interestingly, I was just on a planning call today with a group of classical Christian educators.

I'm going to be doing a day of teacher training next month. And they were kind of describing some of the shifts they're seeing just in the, in the teachers who are showing up to teach at their school. And again, I think a lot like we talked earlier about this shift from kind of the heavy handed authoritarian type of parenting to maybe the other ditch, which tends to be more of that, you know, child centered and the extremes.

I think even in classical Christian schools, there's a little bit of a tension of moving, you know, historically classical folks have probably overdone the head and let's read the great books of Western literature and let's study and have these very thoughtful conversations, very head oriented and a little bit negligent perhaps on the engagement of the affections and the heart. I think now we're seeing a shift far more with awareness that our job as teachers is to meet them at the heart level to express affections for them. They're more than just bodies in seats for spewing information ever.

But again, it's a balancing act because you don't want to become too squishy heart, but not enough head and challenging them to do hard things. These balancing acts are all over the place. How do you see this working out for teachers? Yeah, I, you know, I know some somebody is probably listening going, oh, great.

Here's some more tension points I've got to deal with. I've got to try to balance this on top of work and life and other kids. And oh, by the way, you know, if you've got you've got more than one kid, you know, it's so important to do this with each kid.

But but let's speak into teachers for just a second. I mean, a couple of things. One is, man, I wouldn't end your time with those teachers without giving them a blessing, because you talk about at a pivotal place.

And again, I can think of, you know, two teachers that were now one was, you know, a coach. And I didn't take his classes, but my twin brother did. He was the physics teacher.

And I wasn't taking hard courses at the time. I was a mess. And so, so I didn't actually have, you know, Dr. Curtis in class, but I did have him as a coach.

But then, you know, there was one other coach, one other teacher, just in seminary. And again, it is really interesting how it's as simple a thing as when you walk by their desk, you know, just stop for a second and just look at him. Okay, just look at him, you know, your eyes just neurologically communicate, you know, so much.

And there's that sense in which, you know, it's like, wait, what's wrong? Can I give a super quick example? Yeah, sure. Purdue University did a study with at the library. So you'd walk into the Purdue library.

Now, you know, back then, you had to hand them your library card. Okay. Today, you'd probably just you could probably have it on your phone or something else.

But but it was a literal card. And some libraries are still that way. Okay.

So long story short is that hand them the card, the person would scan their card, hold the card back, but then they would hold on to the card. Okay, so they're the confederate, they're the librarians, the confederate. So they're holding so you you ever had that happen? You Yeah, they're gonna handle it, but they're holding on to it.

Well, what it makes you do is make eye contact with them. And when they made eye contact, they go, Hey, thanks for coming to the Purdue library. Then they'd let go.

Okay. Now watch this, they walk outside. So this was every other student, one of them, they just threw him back the card or not through it.

But you know what I mean? Yeah, the other one, they would hold it. And then thanks for and the people just with that little bit of, you know, but eye contact, but then just spoken, you know, they rated the Purdue library significantly better. So just as a teacher, it doesn't take a ton.

You know, just position just sometimes when you can, you know, just, just that nudge can be a huge thing. Well, just a little. Yeah, Keith McCurdy is often on who Christian counselors talks about, you know, just as teachers, just the little things, you know, the birth birthday of your students, you know, kind of some basic activities are involved in outside of your classroom, just showing that you're getting you meet meet them at the point of being a human.

And I think if you and I were to recount more stories of like teachers who had the biggest

impact on us, it was because they met us in these other places beyond just the intellectual problem. Absolutely. Yeah, it's really good.

Well, we're about at time, John, I want to make sure folks have a chance to learn more about the work you're doing. Give us just for folks who want to dig in deeper. Obviously, a lot of things you've written, you've got strong families.com is a, I guess, a good hub to find your resources.

Yeah. Well, I get to do what you do. And with Hannah, Hannah works with you.

Zipcast and our oldest daughter, Carrie has her MBA and is super sharp and works with me at strong families, and the Center for strong families. So we work with couples and families, we do tons of just, you know, training with military in different situations. But yeah, if they want to find out a book or you know, the grab a hold of, you know, there's a real thin book called the power of the blessing.

It's an abridgment of the the first book just to show you how people's reading has changed was almost 300 pages, the 1986 book, the new abridgment, you know, is like 121. It's a real short book. But it goes through some of the key details.

And again, strong families.com is the best place to find us. That's great. Yeah, that's, that's, yeah, welcome to the modern world.

So I said, Okay, we're gonna get you on zip cast too, we got to do this a lot more quickly these days. But there's a lot of depth for folks who want to dig in to more of your great work. But thank you so much for being on Base Camp and just your encouraging words.

We really appreciate it. I want to take just a moment and let you know about the great work that's being done by Wilson Hill Academy. They offer a vibrant, rich and accredited classical Christian education available to families and schools almost anywhere.

With a click of a button, students join master teachers and friends live online from all over the world to engage in deep and lively discussions, solve math problems, conduct science experiments, translate Latin, deliver thesis presentations and so much more. At Wilson Hill, students make lifelong friends and graduate well prepared for college and beyond. Discover what's possible for your family or school at [wilsonhillacademy.com](http://wilsonhillacademy.com). Well, you've done it, you made it through another episode of Base Camp Live and I sincerely hope that you've been encouraged along the way.

Thank you for being such a faithful listener. And thanks again to America's Christian Credit Union, Classic Learning Test, Gutenberg College and Wilson Hill Academy for sponsoring this episode of Base Camp Live. Be sure to give us a five star rating on Spotify, Apple podcast or wherever you're listening from.

We would love to hear from you. And let us know what's on your mind, what questions you

have. Email us at [info at basecamlive.com](mailto:info@basecamlive.com). We really do appreciate you as a faithful listener.

Take a moment, invite other parents and school leaders, anyone involved in raising the next generation to listen to the podcast. And we will see you back here next week with another episode that you will not want to miss. Thanks again for listening.