**A Word From Our Pastor**

A couple of Sundays ago I spoke in a sermon of four different parenting styles to illustrate the kind of heavenly Father we have. It would be worthwhile to review those styles. I gleaned this from an article in a magazine written by Sociologist Christian Smith of the Notre Dame University faculty.

The four styles are: 1) Authoritative; 2) Authoritarian; 3) Permissive; and 4) Neglectful. The four can be distinguished from each other by the balance of two traits. The first trait has to do with expectations. And the second has to do with loving affection. To draw this out a bit more, high expectations are accompanied by clear boundaries and by being strict. And loving affection has to do with warmth and support.

If what I have just said can be summarized with the two words “strict” and “affectionate” we can quickly contrast the four parenting styles. The Authoritative is marked by being strict and affectionate. The Authoritarian is marked by strictness only, but is lacking in affection. The Permissive is marked by affection, but lacking in strictness. And the Neglectful is lacking in strictness and affection.

Far and away, research demonstrates that the Authoritative is the most effective of the four. The high expectations with clear boundaries and consequences for falling short combined with personal warmth, affection, and support helps children to best internalize those expectations.

Not to be confused with Authoritative, Authoritarian, is found not to be an ineffective style for children internalizing the values and expectations. And it seems a recipe for inciting prolonged rebellion.

Interestingly, the Permissive Style seems as equally disastrous as the Authoritarian. So much for loads of affirmation, affection, and support! Without clear boundaries, high expectations, and strict guidelines, children tend to revel in high esteem with little responsibility and accomplishments to show for it.

What I hope you find interesting is that indeed “tough love” is in the best interest of the beloved. And with God speaking both law and gospel, he excels in true love.

**Since You Asked…**

**What is the purpose of the “Silence for reflection and self-examination” in the Brief Order For Confession and Forgiveness?**

“The silence for self-examination and reflection should be an extended silence to enable personal application of the general phrases of the prayer that follows. Silence of one or two minutes is not too long” (Manual on the Liturgy – LBW). This is a helpful time to reflect back on our lives over the past week and ask ourselves whether we have been disobedient or unfaithful, bad-tempered or dishonest, or whether we have hurt anyone by word or deed. By allowing for this period of reflection we are able to personalize what would otherwise remain quite general.