



THE PASTOR'S VOICE

Insights from Church Leaders

The Pastor's Voice Podcast: Episode 8

Transcript: Boating and Obedience - Life Lessons from Leaving the Safe Harbor

Reuel Sample: She's lived aboard. She's traveled and she's written for her own sailing blog. It is so great to have Tanya Hackney with us today. Tanya, welcome to the pastor's voice.

Tanya Hackney: Well, thank you very much for having me.

Reuel Sample: She's always had a case of wanderlust. She's taken countless road trips and she has spent the last decade or more on board boat and now she's writing about it and her new book, *Leaving the Safe Harbor: The Risks and Rewards of Raising a Family on a Boat*, and Tanya is here to tell us about that and some other thoughts about raising a family in the midst of challenges that come from all angles. Tanya, tell us a little bit about your book. What made you write it? What made you come up with that title?

Tanya Hackney: Well, I have been writing for our blog for 13 years now, I think I started it in 2008 when we just before we bought our boat, which is a sailing catamaran, *Take 2*. I have always been a writer. I have always dreamed of writing a book. I did not want to simply recreate the blog, and so I've been waiting for the right idea to hit me for several years now. And I found a list of 50 sailing idioms - shout out to Ben Reid who posted this online somewhere - and I began to think about those sailing idioms and the ways in which I have a very visceral response to some of them because I've lived through, you know, battening down the hatches or close quarters, maybe not three

sheets to the wind, but there were a bunch of different idioms and they I really connected with them and I began to think of the life lessons that I had learned in the middle of these, you know, experiences that we've had on the boat. And I found that for every idiom I had like a story in my head of something we'd been through and a life lesson that we drew from it. And so that was that became the bones of the book. And so it's a collection of stories from my life connected to nautical idioms, both the literal and figurative interpretation of them, as well as the life lessons that we learned. And I hope that it has a broader application than just to sailors, although sailors will certainly be able to connect with them.

Reuel Sample: I am fascinated as to how you take those idioms and those stories and you make them into life lessons. For instance, your kids of how they had the rules to follow and how that translated into making them really great kids when they come into port. For instance, your last lesson, your last rule on your poster is probably the most important rule of all obey the captain and how that translates well into everything they do. Our listeners might not know I grew up on sailing a boat, and that wasn't the last rule. It was the first rule. Captain Daddy is always right. The second rule is if Captain Daddy is wrong, apply rule number one. And your rule is a lot like that. Obey the captain. And that's really a life and faith lesson as well.

Tanya Hackney: You know that we began our kind of our obedience training with our children much earlier than when we bought the boat. Now on a boat obedience is not just a philosophy or an idea, it can be life and death. And so we knew our children needed to be able to respond to their name. Stop if we said stop. Come if we said come, because it would be the maybe the difference between falling overboard or not. And so obedience was very important. And on the spiritual side, if we never learn to obey our parents, you know who love us imperfectly, then how are we going to learn to obey God who loves us perfectly? We really have to establish, I guess, trust in authority, certainly an appropriate trust in authority so that we when God tells us to go or do something that we're, you know, ready and listening and that we're able to apply self-discipline and self-discipline happens maybe as a result of being disciplined. The goal of discipline is ultimately that you don't need to be ruled, but that you rule yourself. And that was always kind of a conversation that we had with our kids when they didn't didn't like something that we some rule that we had passed down or some way that we applied the rule. If we if our kids were unhappy with some rule that we had passed or

some way that we applied it, we would just explain to them that if they ruled themselves, then we would not have to rule them. If we if a if a people, for example, is self-governing, then they don't need, you know, heavy handed government. And that applies to family life, boat life and probably country life to the life of our country.

Reuel Sample: C.S. Lewis, in his great book *Paralandra*, which he he even C.S. Lewis said was one of his best books, writes all about obedience, even when we don't understand it. And that's I think the role of parents is that we are to teach our kids obedience at an age when they don't understand it. Then, as your kids have grown up and have gained more understanding and more wisdom is that some of that obedience can can be replaced by questioning. But on the other hand, some of that obedience is still there. If the captain says do it, there's a reason why the captain says do it.

Tanya Hackney: Well, obedience is built on trust and love, I mean, sometimes we have to obey even when there is no trust and love. I mean, that's a good example, too, but in a parent child relationship, do they trust us to have their best interests in mind so that they can obey even when they don't understand it? And then there's a little bit of give and take, as you said, as they get older, I think our rule was always obey first, ask later. I was raised in the I told you so generations. So if you asked your parents why, they would say, because I told you so. And that irritated me, and I said, Well, when I'm a parent, I'm always going to explain everything. I tend to now over-explain to my kids, are rolling their eyes like, we get it, mom, we got it. That's enough. Like, Yes, ma'am, I said, Yes, ma'am, but I always wanted them to know why we had made a certain decision. And so we tried not to make arbitrary rules. And when we had to say no or whatever we said, they would obey it and then come back and say, Can you explain your decision? And if we could, we would.

Reuel Sample: You've been around a lot of families on board boat. Is your approach to obedience unique or is it something that you see in a lot of kids who are raised on board boat? Where do it now because it's either a safety issue or something else? And does that translate well to how these kids grow up?

Tanya Hackney: Oh, that's a really good question, and I would have to say that it depends, I think our kids would probably class boat kids into two different categories one, maybe the the sabbatical kids, the kids that are on a trip with their family for maybe

a year or two years. And then the kids that grew up on the boat, the sort of more lifestyle sailors. And and then there's like this whole other category, which they call normal, which is not always a nice thing. So one of my kids says that someone is normal. It's usually an insult. For the most part, boat kids are really engaging and respectful, and they are aware of limitations, and they typically respect those limitations. There've been a few incidents, but then my kids aren't perfect either. So I would say on the whole, boat kids do really well with obedience and because they understand the risks on a boat and the safety issues.

Reuel Sample: We're living in a society where respect for police officers and those in authority have basically gone out the window. We often hear this this whole idea. Well, I'll give respect if you earn my respect. That's not how you're approaching your raising with your kids is that you obey what I tell you because I'm in charge.

Tanya Hackney: I think a respect for authority is important in an ordered society. I think when you begin to throw out that respect that, you know, the foundation begins to crumble, I think you're looking at, you know, societal chaos, probably an anarchy. On the other hand, if you have a corrupt government or if you have authority that has is guilty of abuse, then that's not going to inspire people to respect it. So it really has to be both the in the case of parenting, the parents have do need to earn the respect by being consistent and, you know, at least attempting to not be hypocrites. That's hard to be consistent and not hypocritical. But the kids also have to respect authority even when they don't agree with it. So I think I think there's an unwritten rule. I think there's a contract and a partnership that happens and that when that begins to break down, we're asking for a whole world of trouble.