

PARENTING:

A RIGHTEOUS LEGACY

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PURPOSE: To pass on a godly heritage to our children by understanding and implementing principles from the Word of God concerning parenting.

And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children.

Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 (NLT)

GOAL: A child who grows up to be a mature man or woman who loves God with all their heart and is found to be in the center of God's will for their life.

SESSION I

LIGHTING THE PATH

Let your light shine before men so that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.

Matthew 5:16

We must be an example to our children in word and deed of Christ-likeness. We model by example. We can't expect our children to be real with God if we are not. They pick up our actions, attitudes and speech whether we like it or not.

Do you want your children to study the Bible? Let them see you studying.

Do you want your children to pray? Let them see and hear you praying.

Do you want your children to share their faith with others? Let them see you sharing your faith.

A. Your Relationship With God Must Be Number One Priority

What does Exodus 20:3 mean to you?

To be an example of godliness before your children, God must be Number One. No job; relationships; hobbies; activities, etc. should come before your relationship with God. You must demonstrate this to your children.

What instructions does Proverbs 3:6 give?

Do you seek God's direction on a daily basis or only in times of crisis?

What does say Matthew 6:33 have to say about it?

How do you handle your everyday affairs? Are you trusting God or reverting back to the world's way of doing things?

B. God's Instructions Concerning Your Children

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6 (KJV)

"Dedicate your children to God and point them in the way they should go, and the values they've learned from you will be with them for life." Proverbs 22:6 (TPT)

Dedicate your children to the Lord for service and for His glory. Teach them to love and reverence God. Train up your child in his/her unique way. God has wired them in their own special way. Each child has his own individual gift. As a parent, it's your responsibility to get to know your children; encourage them in those areas and help them fulfill God's calling on their lives.

You will train them whether you realize it or not. They will learn from you. They are little imitators. They will copy something that they see or hear in you, good or bad. Therefore, it's important that you choose to model a godly lifestyle before your children.

C. The Promise of God Concerning Our Children

What does Psalm 112:1-2 have to say about obeying God's commands?

According to Proverbs 20:7, what is the reward for walking with godly integrity?

What does Psalm 37:25 have to say about a righteous man?

God has given us a guarantee that our children will be blessed and be successful because we follow his instructions.

D. Warning of Being A Hearer Only and Not A Doer of The Word

Explain how James 1:22 relates to your children.

We deceive ourselves if we think our children are going to turn out to be the offspring of Psalm 112:2, if we are not doers of the Word of God.

We have the responsibility as Christians to live our lives according to God's instructions. To do otherwise, is to bring judgment not only on ourselves but on our children. Numbers 14:18 (NLT) Galatians 6:7 (KJV)

SESSION II

Discipline Your Children

**Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child;
The rod of discipline (correction administered with godly
wisdom and loving kindness) will remove it far from him.**

Proverbs 22:15 (AMP)

Before you get uneasy concerning discipline of your children, it may or may not require spanking. Discipline does need love, authority and trust. Although there is a modern day philosophy about letting your child make his/her own decisions because it helps them be independent - this is not what God's word says.

A. Children Are Not Born with Wisdom To Make Right Decisions

How does Proverbs 22:15 tell you to deal with foolishness in children?

According to Proverbs 29:15, how does an undisciplined child affect the family?

Proverbs 22:6 tells parents to train up their children. What does that mean to you?

Based on God's Word, children are not naturally equipped to make good choices in life. They must be taught. In fact, the Word of God tells us we are all born in sin with a sin nature. Psalms 51:5 and Romans 3:23

B. Don't Be Afraid To Discipline Because You Fear Your Children Will Not Love You Or That It Means You Don't Love Them

Hebrews 12:6-7 (AMP)"For the Lord disciplines and corrects those who He loves, and He punishes every son whom He receives and welcomes (to His Heart). You must submit to (correction for the purpose of) discipline; God is dealing with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?"

What does Proverbs 3:11-12 have to say about discipline?

What does Proverbs 13:24 say about sparing the rod of discipline?

Don't buy into the lie of the devil that not disciplining and correcting your children is loving them and to do otherwise is to hate them. Discipline your children because it is right and it is what God says you should do. Parents should discipline their children because they have disobeyed and dishonored God not because you, the parent has been inconvenienced or embarrassed. Parents discipline out of love. (Proverbs 13:24)

Discipline may even seem unpleasant when received, however, it will produce a "harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it." (Hebrews 12:11)

C. How Do You Discipline?

The method to discipline your child should be one that seeks to show affectionate love to the child in a structured environment with firm authority. The discipline administered should be equal with the offense. The punishment should be fair and just.

1. Children need boundaries set by the parents for their protection and well-being. Refer back to Proverbs 22:15.
2. The boundaries must be clearly defined by the parents and communicated to the child on the level of their understanding. Refer back to Proverbs 22:6.
3. Three goals for discipline:

a. Provides Penalty for Disobedience. Proverbs 15:10 (NLT)

"Whoever abandons the right path will be severely disciplined; whoever, hates correction will die."

What is your understanding of Proverbs 15:10?

Punishment should be used as an effective means of discipline not revenge. There must be a penalty for wrongdoing. Discipline should never be given in anger. It must be consistent. It should create an intimacy instead of a distance between the child and parents. Like our heavenly Father, parents must consistently correct their children through communication.

b. Teaching Proper Conduct. Proverbs 6:23 and Psalms 94:12.

The elements in these verses command instructions, teaching and discipline. The command or instruction is the lamp which gives light. As the child operates in the light, it teaches him even when he moves outside the rules of discipline he receives it as a lesson he can learn from operating outside the rules.

c. Promotes Self-Discipline. A life walking in obedience will experience far fewer troubles. Proverbs 13:18 (MSG) says "Refuse discipline and end up homeless; embrace correction and live an honored life." Self-discipline should be a parent's ultimate goal for their children. Self-discipline is that willingness to do what you know is right because it is the right thing to do (integrity) Proverbs 11:3 and 20:7.

What does Proverbs 20:7 have to say about integrity?

Here is the balance as stated in Isaiah 1:19. Your children will experience all the good things of being your child such as allowing them to play with friends; fellowship with the rest of the family at meal time or family movie; able to drive the car; go to movies and other activities with friends. Remember Ephesians 6:4 "correct the wrong and affirm the good."

SESSION III

Developing Respectful Children

**Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit; but in humility consider others better than yourselves.
Philippians 2:3 (NIV)**

We are living in a society where disrespect for parents, others, and those in authority seems to be addressed with little concern.

A. Question: Are you raising your children to focus more on their self-esteem than self-respect?

Although there is nothing wrong with an individual having self-esteem but having it without self-respect is destruction. When we focus entirely on the former instead of the latter, we have a tendency to refrain from discipline and try to give our children everything.

Remember, without self-respect there will be little respect for others. Matthew 12:35 (NIV) states "A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him."

What does Matthew 12:35 say to you about respecting others?

B. As Parents, We Must Instill Respect In Our Children

Be the person you want your children to become. Every seed produces after its kind. Genesis 1:12

Explain what Luke 6:43-44 is saying to you about producing fruit.

If we are going to have respectful children, we must show respect and the best place is at home by using simple words as please; thank you; excuse me; I am sorry; please forgive me, etc. Train your children to address adults and those in authority as Mr.; Mrs; Yes Sir and Yes Ma'am.

C. You Determine the Type of Home You Will Have

Make sure your home is a character centered home; not a parent or child centered home.

1. Character Centered Home: God; Husband/Wife; Children; Others; Self
Parents are more concerned with their child's character than their child's comfort.

Character Centered Parents do the following:

a. Make decisions that are focused on the desired end result.

Children who respect God, others and themselves. They have a purpose for their lives.

b. Look to God's instructions for parenting. Receive wisdom from God.

c. They keep their promises. Let your "yes" be "yes" and your "no" be "no".
If they trust you, they will obey you.

d. They put God first, then marriage, children, others & finally themselves.

Kids need to know that their parents' marriage is above them. The parents love for each other is the foundation of the love for them.

You don't put the needs of others before your children.

2. Parent Centered Home: Doing what the parent wants regardless of:

a. The negative effect it can have on the children.

b. Trying to fulfill a dream of their youth through the children at the cost of what God's purpose is for them.

They are more concerned with their own agenda than the child's best interest.

3. Child Centered Home: Everything revolves around the child.

- a. Yielding to whatever they desire regardless of their behavior.
- b. Parents are more centered with their child's approval rather than their child's well-being.

D. Building Respect Checklist

1. Are you more interested in your children's grades than their character?
2. Do you sometimes brush your children off when they are trying to get your attention, especially when you are busy? How do you think they interpret that?
3. If your children viewed God's love through you, would it be unconditional, patient, always trusting, slow to anger (1 Cor. 13:4-8a)?
4. In the past, has your "No" meant an absolute "No" or "Sometimes"; "Maybe"; or even "Yes"?
5. Are you giving your children opportunities to serve others?

E. Stress Purpose Not Performance

Purpose: Living up to their God-given potential. Who your children become should be more important than what they do. Jesus was our example of someone who lived with purpose. He reached his potential.

Performance: Parents focus on their children being #1.

What is your motive? Are we inspiring our children out of a heart of love or are we pushing them out of a heart filled with selfish ambitions?

The drive to succeed should be in balance with a child's capabilities.

1. Encourage diligence; perseverance and responsibility in your child.

Your job as a parent is to help your children become their best selves so they can fulfill their God given purpose. God created them with talents; abilities and a unique personality.

2. Help your child discover their strengths and weaknesses.
3. Encourage stickability. Children can try out different sports; play different instruments until they find their niche in elementary, however, as they get older they need to get more specific.
4. Guard against perfectionism. Why do we insist on perfection in our children when we are not?
5. Allow for play.
6. Encourage a close relationship with God - they will begin on their own to want to please Him. Teach them to talk to God. Deuteronomy 6:5-9

SESSION IV

Developing Unselfish Children

"Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us.

Romans 12:3 (NLT)

It is important that our children do not get an inflated ego opinion about themselves while still realizing they are somebody because of Jesus Christ. Individuals with an inflated opinion of themselves tend to be selfish, looking at life through a glass mirror only seeing themselves. The unselfish look at life through a glass window and are able to see others.

A. To Develop Unselfish Children - Parents Must do Self-Inventory

1. Do children see parents helping one another to get things done in the family?
2. Are you always too tired to join activities your children enjoy and desire your participation?
3. Do they see you helping those that are less fortunate than you?

What does Acts 20:35 say about helping those who are less fortunate?

B. Children At An Early Age Are Selfish

Children are selfish as early as the age of 18 months to 2 years old. They begin to say those words: "That's mine". Parents must begin at that early age teaching them to share with others.

C. Help Our Children Hearts Move In The Right Direction

There are three things that can help our children's heart move in the right direction: Forgiveness, Generosity and Gratitude

1. **Forgiveness** - they must see in us. Mark 11:25

- a. Forgiving them when they do wrong.
- b. Forgiving others when they offend you.
- c. Asking your kids for forgiveness when you wrong them.
- d. Teach them to ask for forgiveness.

2. **Generosity** is an outward expression of the condition of the heart. A heart that freely gives has no room for greediness or selfishness.

Model generosity to your children.

- a. Let them see you helping others who need help.
- b. Let them see you praying for someone that needs prayers.
- c. Let them see you giving words of encouragement to someone who is feeling down (may it be an adult or one of their friends).

Explain Romans 15:1.

3. **Gratitude** - in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. 1 Thess. 5:18

a. Tame the greedy monster in you.

b. Do you desire more and more money just to buy more stuff or so that you can give more?

c. Do your children always hear you asking God for more stuff or thanking Him for what you have such as life; health; love; relationships; peace, etc.?

d. Teach your children to write thank you notes. Always express your thanks to people who serve you in restaurants; at banks; at grocery markets.

e. Everywhere you go - show your gratitude.

Children who learn a lot about God gain a healthy perspective on life. They come to understand it is not about them but about God.