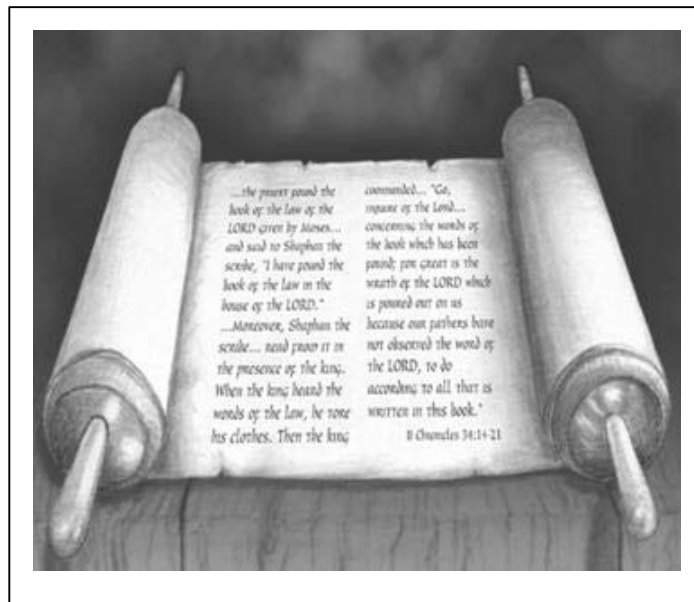


# *Parenting Is A Ministry*

**Biblical Principles for Parenting**



## **Study Workbook**

3<sup>rd</sup> edition

561 North Magnolia Ave. • El Cajon, CA. 92020 • phone (619) 590-1901

Email: [info@parentingministry.org](mailto:info@parentingministry.org) website: [www.parentingministry.org](http://www.parentingministry.org)



Dear Parents,

As a father of three children, a former youth pastor and a family counselor, I am absolutely convinced that God's Word is a complete manual for raising children. I have witnessed within my own family and hundreds of others how God's Word brings direction and understanding to both parents and their children.

*Parenting Is A Ministry* will open your eyes to parenting principles and biblical truths that you may never have considered, give you clarity to God's will and purpose in parenting *His* children, and a clear game plan to raise your children to maturity.

I encourage you to seek the Lord and ask Him to open your heart to receive from Him. Be willing to accept His loving correction, be challenged to make changes in areas that He reveals and, above all, be comforted that God loves you and your children and has the power to transform your home. I know that God will bless you as you believe and follow His Word.

Your Fellow Servant,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig Caster", is positioned above the typed name.

Pastor Craig Caster  
Founder/Director

*For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the Word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.*

*1 Thessalonians 2:13*





## About the Author

Pastor Craig Caster is the Founder and Director of Family Discipleship Ministries. In early 1992 Craig began to experience a burden for families from the Lord. At this point in his life Craig was the Vice President of a large developing company in San Diego, California and had spent 8 years as a lay minister leading a marriage ministry as well as a youth ministry. During that year the Lord began to reveal the vision for this ministry and in January 1993, Craig left his career for full-time ministry. In 1994 Family Discipleship Ministries became a non-profit ministry in San Diego, California.

Craig has gained a reputation among many evangelical churches as a trusted resource for family counseling, seminars, and family ministry resources. He has developed biblically based marriage and parenting tools and taught thousands through seminars hosted in churches around the country and abroad. These biblical seminars have been embraced by the county of San Diego, and meet the requirement for parents under court order to attend parenting classes. Craig has served on several school and community based organizations. In 1997 Craig was asked by the San Diego City Attorney's Office to help design their *Parenting Project*, an early intervention program for troubled teens, also providing support, and resources for parents, in collaboration with the police department, juvenile probation, and the county courts.

In addition, under Craig's leadership, Family Discipleship Ministries developed and implemented a youth mentoring ministry for children from single-parent families, foster care, and group homes with over 400 graduates between 1994 and 2000. Over the past 20 years Craig has worked with both children and parents as a youth pastor, marriage counselor, teacher, and speaker.

Craig has been married since 1980. He and his wife are the parents of three children, Nicholas, Justin, and Katelyn.

## About Family Discipleship Ministries

Family Discipleship Ministries is a non-profit ministry that was established in 1994, under the Founder and Director Pastor Craig Caster. The main purpose of this ministry is to support, educate, and train the body of Christ to more effectively minister to families. To accomplish this goal we offer family counseling, teaching seminars on marriage and parenting, spiritual discipleship, church leadership training, and counseling training. Family Discipleship Ministries also offers numerous materials in video and audio format, workbooks, paperback, and online resources in English as well as several other languages.

The vision of Family Discipleship Ministries is to reach out to Christian churches, enabling them to disciple their congregations in marriage and parenting. To date thousands of parents throughout the US and abroad have completed our biblical marriage and parenting classes hosted in churches as well as through our free online classes.

# Parenting is a Ministry

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*Parenting  
Is A  
Ministry*

SESSION ONE

*God's Purposes for Parents*

# PARENTING IS A MINISTRY

**Session One**

**God's Purposes for Parents**

**God Created The Family**

Genesis 1:28; 2:18,24

**Parenting Is A Ministry**

Psalm 145:17

**Parents are ministers over their children.**

**Minister** (Webster's Dictionary)

- *One who acts under the orders of another or who is employed by another to execute his purposes.*
- *To adjust, regulate, or set in order.*

**Genesis 18:19** *"For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."*

- Command his children.
- Teach with intention – to be very intentional about our ways.

**Jesus Christ set the example.**

**Matthew 20:28** *"just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

A minister is a \_\_\_\_\_.

As ministers of our Lord Jesus Christ our disposition must be to \_\_\_\_\_ His will and purposes in all things through our life.

A minister's desire is to obey his master's wishes and look to Him for all his strength and affirmations.

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## God's Purposes For Parents

- **Purpose** – *An intended or desired result, a goal.*

**God's purpose** \_\_\_\_\_ **us.**

**God's purpose** \_\_\_\_\_ **us.**

### 1. Our Transformation

**1 John 2:5** *"But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him."*

- **Perfect** – *To make complete, a process, transformation.*

**Isaiah 29:16 (NLT)** *"How stupid can you be? He is the Potter, and He is certainly greater than you. You are only the jars He makes! Should the thing that was created say to the one who made it, "He didn't make us"? Does a jar ever say, "The potter who made me is stupid?"*

- **Our children are God's fingers to reshape us.**
- **God has a purpose for us in the trials we face.**

### 2. God's Glorification

**1 Corinthians 6:20** *"For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."*

**Matthew 5:16** *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."*

**Remember Moses** - Numbers 20:8-13

### 3. To Love Our Children

**Psalms 127:3 (NAU)** *"Behold, children are a gift of the LORD, the fruit of the womb is a reward."*

- Our children's value is based upon God's Word.

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**4. To Train Our Children**

**Ephesians 6:4** *“And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”*

- **Bring them up** - *To raise them to maturity, to train and educate.*

**God’s instructions do not change for blended or single-parent families.**

**Psalm 68:5** *“A father of the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy habitation.”*

- **Widow** – Greek “*chera*” is derived from the word “*chasma*” meaning a “*deficiency or a vacancy.*”

**James 1:27** *“Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.”*

**Matthew 11:28** *“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”*

**Psalm 10:14** *“...The helpless commits himself to You; You are the helper of the fatherless.”*

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Parenting is a Ministry  
**God's Purposes for Parents**  
**Homework**

1. Write out in your own words how seeing your role as a minister changes your perspective as a parent (see page 1).

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2. How does being a minister affect you as a father and mother (if married) when it comes to how to handle the raising of your children (see page 1)?

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3. What are God's purposes for parents? Turn to page 2 for help with your answer.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_  
4) \_\_\_\_\_

4. Make a list of non-glorifying behaviors that God is revealing in you through the trials and/or difficulties in raising your children. Example: impatience, resentment, etc.

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If married, discuss these things as a couple, then together take them to the Lord. Ask for His forgiveness and for the ability to take responsibility every time these things are manifested through you. Ask for the faith to trust *His* way in bringing about your transformation. **Remember:** there is no growth or transformation taking place if you do not ask for forgiveness...every time.

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Session Two

*A Strong Foundation*



**Deuteronomy 6:5** "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength."

To choose to have an \_\_\_\_\_ relationship with Him.

**Deuteronomy 6:6** "And these words which I command you today shall be first in your own heart."

To \_\_\_\_\_ in Him and to obey.

### OUR SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION

**Luke 6:46-49** "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?"

"Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like:

"He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock.

"But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great."

### The Ingredients Of A Strong Foundation

1. "Comes to me" - \_\_\_\_\_
2. "Hears my sayings" - \_\_\_\_\_
3. "Does them" - \_\_\_\_\_

**Lamentations 3:40** "Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the LORD." (NIV)

### A Personal Inspection of Your Spiritual Foundation

(Grade yourself, A, B, C, D, or F)

- \_\_\_\_ 1. Have you given your life to Christ? Yes / No
- \_\_\_\_ 2. Your prayer life? (Philippians 4:6)
- \_\_\_\_ 3. Spending time daily reading the Word of God? (Mark 4:34, 2 Timothy 2:15)





## ***How to Develop Intimacy with God Through Daily Devotions***

### **HOMEWORK**

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- **Intimacy** – *Marked by very close association, contact, or friendship developing through long association; very familiar; suggesting informal warmth or privacy; of a very personal nature.*
1. Choose the best time of day (morning or evening) to commit to setting aside devotional time. Don't set yourself up for discouragement by setting a goal that you will not be able to keep. Start small, and then add time as you grow. Begin with 15 minutes.
  2. Choose a book of the Bible. Read one chapter, or less if it is a long chapter or verses that you want to ponder. In addition, you may also want to read a daily devotional. See suggestions listed below.
  3. Pray. Specifically pray over the truths you have read, asking God to speak to you about how you can obey; what you should do or what you should change in your life in order to obey.
  4. Spend a few minutes in quiet listening. This may be uncomfortable for you at first. Living in a noise-filled world, most of us are not accustomed to sitting quietly. Persevere and God will be faithful to speak to you. Remember that the Holy Spirit is dwelling in your heart and mind and can minister to you in your thoughts!
  5. Journal. Write out what these verses mean to you.
- **Journal** – *A record of experiences, ideas, or reflections kept regularly for private use.*
6. Pray. Use the following to help you pray effectively:  
  
**Adoration** – Worship and praise God  
**Confession** – Confess and repent of any known sins  
**Thanksgiving** – Expressing gratitude for God's blessings in your life  
**Supplication** – Humbly make requests for your needs and the needs of others
  7. Pray that God will help you to know and acknowledge His presence throughout your day.

#### Suggested Devotionals

*Biblical Principles for a Strong Foundation*, by Craig Caster  
*Daily Experience with God*, by Andrew Murray  
*Drawing Near: Daily Readings for a Deeper Faith*, by John F. MacArthur  
*Every Day with Jesus: First Steps with New Believers*, by Greg Laurie  
*Experiencing God*, by Henry T. Blackaby and Claude V. King  
*Meet the Bible: A Panorama of God's Word...*, by Philip Yancey and Brenda Quinn  
*My Utmost for His Highest*, by Oswald Chambers  
*On the Other Side of the Garden*, by Virginia Ruth Fugate (married women)  
*Streams in the Desert*, by Mrs. Charles E. Cowman  
*The One Year Book of Psalms*, by William J. Peterson and Randy Petersen  
*The Power of a Praying Wife*, by Stormie Omartian (married women)

## Parent's Commitment To Put Jesus Christ First In Your Life HOMEWORK

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Perhaps you have struggled in some areas of parenting and have come to realize that your struggles are a result of a weak or inconsistent spiritual life. God promises to bless, encourage, and strengthen us as we submit to His lordship in our life.

*"The LORD will give strength to His people; the LORD will bless His people with peace." Psalm 29:11*

Write a prayer to the Lord, committing to put Him first in your life and asking Him to help you parent the *gifts* (children) He has given you.

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**Perhaps you have never surrendered your life to Christ. Know that God loves you and has provided the way for you to have a relationship with Him. You must simply,**

**1. Recognize and admit you are a sinner.**

**Romans 3:23** *"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*

**Romans 6:23** *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

**2. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for your sins and that He is the only way for sinners to be forgiven and reconciled to God.**

**John 14:6** *"Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*

**Acts 4:12** *"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."*

**3. Confess your sins to Jesus and repent (be sorry), asking Him to forgive you.**

**Acts 3:19** *"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord."*

**Romans 10:9** *"If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."*

**4. Ask Jesus to come into your heart and receive Him as your Savior and Lord.**

**John 1:12** *"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name."*

**Repeat the following prayer:**

*"Lord Jesus, I admit that I am a sinner. I am sorry for my sin. Thank you for dying on the cross for me and paying the price for my sin. Please come into my heart. Fill me with your Holy Spirit and help me to be your disciple. Thank you for forgiving me and coming into my life. Thank you that I am now a child of God and will one day follow you to heaven." Amen*



# A Personal Inspection of Your Foundation

## HOMEWORK

Luke 6:46-49

(Grade yourself, A, B, C, D, or F)

1. **“...comes to Me...”** – To receive Christ

Have you come to Him and received Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior?

Yes  No

If you have not received Christ, but would like to, the Parent’s Commitment worksheet will assist you in making your commitment.

2. **“...hears My sayings...”** – To abide in Christ

**My prayer and devotional life** -  A  B  C  D  F

How is your prayer life? Is it growing and a daily part of your life? Do words like intimate, worship, listening, or relationship describe your prayer life? Do you, as a husband and wife, pray together daily? Do you pray with your children daily?

*“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.” Philippians 4:6*

How often do you spend time reading the Word of God? Do you spend time meditating over what you read in your devotional time?

*“...when they were alone, He explained all things to His disciples.” Mark 4:34*

*“Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15*

3. **“...does them...”** – To obey Christ

**My finances** -  A  B  C  D  F

Do you trust God with your finances? Do you give tithes regularly?

*“Honor the LORD with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your increase. So your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine.” Proverbs 3:9-10*

**My priorities** -  A  B  C  D  F

How are your priorities with God, spouse, children, work, church, leisure time, and fellowship? Are they in the proper order and does your family agree?

*“Let all things be done decently and in order.” 1 Corinthians 14:40*

Read 1 Timothy 3:1-13. How does God prioritize your family in these Scriptures?

**My practices** -  A  B  C  D  F

Are you practicing godly principles daily in your own home? Are you glorifying Jesus Christ before your children and family? Is His fruit evident in your life?

*“Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” Galatians 5:22-23*

Parenting is a Ministry  
**A Strong Foundation**  
**Homework**

1. On pages 5 and 6 “*A Strong Foundation*” we reviewed Deuteronomy 6:1-6 and Luke 6:46-49. In your own words, briefly summarize what these verses mean.

Deuteronomy 6:1-6

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Luke 6:46-49

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2. What are the ingredients of a strong foundation? See page 6 for your answers.

1) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

3. Review the Scriptures on page 8 that discuss why suffering is part of our journey as a parent: 1 Peter 4:16, 1 Corinthians 10:13, Psalm 127:1, and 2 Peter 1:1-4. Write out your prayer to the Lord and ask Him to help you to accept His plan in these difficult times. Also write out your commitment to look to Him daily for the grace to love and serve your children according to His will.

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Session Three

*Loving Communication*







**7. Love does not seek to have its own way.**

Insisting that your children and family do only what you want to do.

**1 Corinthians 10:24** "Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being."

**Galatians 5:13** "...through love serve one another."

**8. Love does not think evil.**

Love does not keep score of our children's failures or mistakes, and then *beat them over the head* with them when an opportunity arises.

**1 Corinthians 13:5** "...keeps no records of wrongs." (NIV)

**1 Corinthians 13:5** "...thinks no evil" (NKJ)

**1 Corinthians 13:5** "... is not irritable or touchy. It does not hold grudges and will hardly even notice when others do it wrong." (TLB)

**Ephesians 4:32** "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you."

**9. Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness.**

Telling our children "I told you so, you deserve what you got," when they fall in sin or experience consequences from their sin.

**Proverbs 14:9** "Fools mock at sin, but among the upright there is favor."

**10. Not rejoicing in the truth.**

Failing to praise our children for their good deeds.

**Romans 12:9** "Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good."

**3 John 4** "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."





# HOMEWORK

## EFFECTIVE LISTENING SELF-EVALUATION

Complete the *Effective Listening Self-Evaluation* to help you become more aware of your listening habits. Answer each question thoughtfully and honestly.

### ***Communicating Knowledge and Attitudes***

#	Do You...	Most of the Time	Frequently	Occasionally	Almost Never
1	...tune-out your child when you don't agree with them or don't want to hear?				
2	...concentrate on what is being said even if you are not really interested?				
3	...assume you know what your child is going to say and stop listening?				
4	...repeat in your own words what your child has just said?				
5	...listen to your child's viewpoint, even if it differs from yours?				
6	...remain open to learning something from them, even if it seems insignificant?				
7	...find out what words mean when they are used in ways not familiar to you?				
8	...form a rebuttal in your head while your child is still talking?				
9	...give the appearance of listening when you are not?				
10	...daydream while your child is talking?				
11	...listen for main ideas, not just facts?				
12	...recognize that words don't always mean the same thing to different people?				
13	...listen to only what you want to hear, blotting out your child's whole message?				
14	...look at your child when they are speaking?				
15	...concentrate on your child's meaning rather than how he or she looks?				
16	...know which words and phrases you tend to respond to emotionally?				
17	...think about what you want to accomplish with your communication?				

### **Communicating Knowledge and Attitudes**

#	Do You...	Most of the Time	Frequently	Occasionally	Almost Never
18	...plan the best time to say what you want to say?				
19	...think about how the other person might react to what you say?				
20	...consider the best way to communicate (written, spoken, and/or the timing)?				
21	...always care about your child's emotional condition when speaking to them (if they are stressed, sad, worried, hostile, disinterested, rushed, angry, etc.)?				
22	...adjust your communication to each child's personality?				
23	...think, " <i>I assumed he or she would know that?</i> " Assuming that your child knows and understands what you are communicating and/or communicated to them?				
24	...allow your child to respectfully vent negative feelings toward you without becoming defensive?				
25	...regularly make efforts to increase your listening efficiency?				
26	...take notes when necessary to help you remember?				
27	...listen closely without being distracted by surroundings?				
28	...listen to your child without judging or criticizing?				
29	...restate instructions and messages to be sure you understand correctly?				
30	...come in with a statement about what you believe your child is feeling?				

# HOMEWORK

## Effective Listening Self-Evaluation Scoring Index

Circle the number that represents the category you checked on each item of the  
*Effective Listening Self-Evaluation.*

#	Most of the Time	Frequently	Occasionally	Almost Never
1	1	2	3	4
2	4	3	2	1
3	1	2	3	4
4	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1
6	4	3	2	1
7	4	3	2	1
8	1	2	3	4
9	1	2	3	4
10	1	2	3	4
11	4	3	2	1
12	4	3	2	1
13	1	2	3	4
14	4	3	2	1
15	4	3	2	1
16	4	3	2	1
17	4	3	2	1
18	4	3	2	1
19	4	3	2	1
20	4	3	2	1
21	4	3	2	1
22	4	3	2	1
23	1	2	3	4
24	4	3	2	1
25	4	3	2	1
26	4	3	2	1
27	4	3	2	1
28	4	3	2	1
29	4	3	2	1
30	4	3	2	1
<b>Total</b>				

**GRAND TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_

110-120: Excellent Listener \_\_\_\_\_

99-109: Above Average Listener \_\_\_\_\_

88-98: Average Listener \_\_\_\_\_

77-87: Fair Listener \_\_\_\_\_

<77: Poor to Very Poor Listener \_\_\_\_\_

# HOMEWORK

## Improve Your Loving Communication Habits

(If married, review and discuss as a couple)

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After completing the *Effective Listening Self-Evaluation* and totaling your score, write out the areas you need to change. Review and discuss as a couple, if married. Then review *What Love Is and Is Not* from pages 14-17 of your workbook and write out, by priority, any unbiblical communication habits you have been practicing in your home that you need God's strength to change.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

If you believe that you have not been demonstrating loving communication to your children (or a particular child), I strongly recommend that you follow the steps below to reconciliation.

- 1) Confess this to the Lord and ask Him to forgive you for not communicating love to *His* child/children.

1 John 1:9 *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

- 2) Ask God to fill your heart with renewed love for your child/children.

Romans 5:5 *"Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us."*

- 3) Go to your child/children and make an age-appropriate confession. For example, *"I love you, but I know that I have not been showing you that love with my words. I have been very impatient (unkind, etc.) and I need to apologize. Please forgive me. I love you and I am so glad to be your mom/dad."*

- 4) Pray with your child.

Write out a prayer of commitment to seek the Lord to empower you to change in these areas and to become the parent to your child that God desires you to be.

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*Parenting  
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Session Four

*Loving Communication*



## Our Children's Uniqueness

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

- **Train up** (original Hebrew form) – *To dedicate or set aside for divine service.*
- **In the way he should go** (from a Hebrew idiom) - *According to the demands of his/her personality, conduct, or stage of life.*

**God is the creator of the soul, the mind, will and emotions; our personalities.**

**Jeremiah 38:16** *"...As the LORD lives, who made our very souls..."*

**There is a time and a season for all things.**

**Ecclesiastes 3:1** *"To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven"*

## Common Reasons We Fail To Love

### 1. Unforgiveness

**Matthew 6:14-15** *"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. "But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."*

**Forgiveness does not mean:**

- That the offender agrees with you.
- That the offender asks for your forgiveness.
- That the offender accepts your forgiveness.
- That the relationship has to be or will be restored.

### 2. The Set Up – (Satanic attack on our minds and our thoughts)

**2 Corinthians 10:4-5** *"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ"*

- Lies (*John 8:44*)
- Condemnation/accusations against others or ourselves (*Revelation 12:9,10*)
- Temptations to sin (*Matthew 4:3*)





Parenting is a Ministry  
**Parent Discussion Homework**  
(If married, complete and discuss as a couple)

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1. Take some time to discuss the habit of facial expressions and/or angry outbursts that need to change.

- Think of when they normally occur (for example, when you come home from work, during or after disciplining your child, when your spouse doesn't support or agree with you, etc.) At what times or during what circumstances do these sinful unloving things happen?

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- Is there a particular child who brings out the worst in you? Write your response below.

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2. As a couple, what practical things can you do to help each other during these times?

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3. Review *Common Reasons We Fail to Love* (Pages 23-24) and discuss. Which ones apply to you?

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4. If the Lord has revealed to you that unforgiveness is an issue, turn to pages 27-30 in this session of the workbook for *The Biblical Principles of Forgiveness and Reconciliation*. Review these principles and ask the Lord to help you follow through with forgiving others. This may include your own parents, children, or spouse.

5. Take some time and review *Ways to Tell Your Child "I Love You" Without Saying the Words* on page 26. Circle the ones you are going to begin doing on a regular basis. Commit these things to prayer. Ask the Lord to help you follow through with your commitment.

# ***Ways to Tell Your Child “I Love You” Without Saying the Words*** **HOMEWORK**

(Review and discuss as a couple, if married)

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1. Attend their sports events, music performance, school plays, etc.
2. Find opportunities to trust your child by granting him/her a new area of responsibility.
3. Have a family picnic on a Sunday afternoon.
4. Walk in the rain and jump puddles together.
5. Listen to your child with all your attention.
6. Sit down together and watch your child’s favorite television show.
7. Skip rocks together on a lake, pond, or river.
8. Say, “*I’m proud of you.*”
9. After your teenager comes in from an outing, have popcorn together by the fireplace.
10. Tell your child about the things that you appreciate most about your own parents.
11. Have a family water-balloon fight (without you as the prime target).
12. Take an evening walk together.
13. Let your child *catch you* bragging about them to a friend.
14. Hug your child *just because*.
15. Postpone an appointment and, instead, do something your child enjoys doing.
16. Surprise your child by giving them a day off from school and spend the day together.
17. Tell your daughter that she is beautiful.
18. Tell your son that he is handsome.
19. Give your child grace when he/she has made a mistake.
20. Pray with your child everyday!
21. Seize appropriate opportunities to ask your child for his/her opinion.
22. Accept your child’s unique personality traits.
23. Write a note expressing your love for them.
24. Bake or buy their favorite cookies.
25. Make popcorn and enjoy an old movie together.
26. Take them out to a restaurant for breakfast or dinner.
27. Take up a hobby that *they* particularly like to do.
28. Start a new hobby together.

# The Biblical Principles of Forgiveness and Reconciliation

(Review and discuss as a couple, if married)

The word *forgive* means literally, *to give away*. When a debt is forgiven, the rights to payment are *given away*. If someone injures me and I forgive him or her, I *give away* the freedom to continue being angry and resentful towards the one who wronged me. I absorb the loss myself. The word *pardon* is derived from the Latin word, *perdonare*, meaning to *grant freely*. True forgiveness is undeserved, unmerited, and free. It is not *just* or *fair*. In the Scriptures, to *forget* means, *to let go from one's power*.

## ∞ The Cost of UnForgiveness

When we refuse to grant forgiveness, choosing rather to maintain our *right* to demand payment for wrongs done to us, we must be willing to absorb the cost incurred by that choice. Forgiveness is free, however unforgiveness carries with it a costly price tag. Unwillingness to forgive produces *resentment*. Resentment means, *to feel again*. Resentment clings to the past, reliving it over and over. Resentment, like *picking a scab*, prohibits our wounds from healing.

In Hebrews 12:15 we learn that bitterness, like a deep root, takes a firm hold in the human heart, then grows, and produces *fruit*. However, rather than nourish others, this fruit is bitter, causes trouble, and defiles others.

*"See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled."* Hebrews 12:15

Most of us do not readily admit that we have been harboring unforgiveness. However, Ephesians 4:31 teaches that there is undeniable evidence in an individual's life that the bitter tree of resentment is growing within their heart.

*"Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice."* Ephesians 4:31

*Wrath* – An outburst of a strong, vengeful anger or indignation, seeking retribution.

*Anger* – A state of mind marked by fretfulness and grief.

*Evil speaking* – Unkind words, verbal abuse against someone, slander, wounding someone's reputation by evil reports, backbiting, insult and defamation.

*Malice* – Hateful feelings that we nurture in our hearts. A desire to see another suffer.

### "Fruits" of Unforgiveness

- Pride
- Health problems
- Self-centered
- Self-righteous
- Self-pity
- Emotional disturbances
- Judgmental & critical of others
- Anxiety, tension & stress
- Lack of trust in relationships
- Lack of peace
- Thinking you are superior to others
- Ultra-sensitive & easily offended
- Absence of peace & joy
- Eating Disorders
- Broken fellowship with Jesus

## ☪ *Why Forgive?*

Besides the before mentioned devastation that results from unforgiveness, we are indebted to forgive because:

### **1. God commands it!**

Obedience to the Father is not optional. If we pick and choose when we will and will not obey God's commands, we will live unfruitful, ineffective, and spiritually barren lives.

*"But love your enemies, and do good...and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."* Luke 6:35-36

### **2. In forgiving, we resemble Jesus, and bear the family likeness.**

The term *Christian* means *little Christ*. As Christians, we are called to carry the name of Christ to a lost world. We must be willing to bear His image; to be like Him. Christ demonstrated forgiveness. He came to this earth to bring forgiveness to the guilty. He gave the commission to the church to continue proclaiming forgiveness. We must, if we are to rightly bear His name, forgive those who have offended us!

*"...the one who says he abides in Him ought to walk in the same manner as He walked."*  
1 John 2:6

### **3. It is the only means of breaking the cycle of blame and pain.**

Forgiveness offers the way out! It does not settle all questions of blame and fairness, often evading those questions altogether. It does allow a relationship to start over, to begin anew.

This truth is demonstrated in the life of Joseph in Genesis chapters 37-45. Though he was mistreated, betrayed, abandoned by his brothers, and sold into slavery, he refused to allow the root of bitterness to take hold of his life. Shortly before being reunited with his brothers, he testified of the healing work that God had done in his life during the years of separation, as demonstrated in the naming of his sons. In Genesis 41:51-52 we read:

*"Joseph named the firstborn Manasseh, "For," he said, "God has made me forget all my trouble in all my father's household."*

*"He named the second Ephraim, "For," he said, "God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction..."*

To *forget* in this sense does not mean to cease to remember, but *to let go*, to cease to let the memory of hurtful things control your present life. Joseph's *fruitfulness* was directly related to his *forgetfulness*. Remember that resentment means *to feel again*. Joseph chose to trust God with his past. Unforgiveness imprisons us to the past and locks out all potential for a fruitful life.

During Joseph's years alone in Egypt, he allowed God to heal his heart, which had been broken by his own brothers. Later, when given the opportunity, Joseph extended love, forgiveness, and grace to his brothers. Joseph speaks to his brothers in Genesis 45:5, 7, & 15.

*"Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life...and to keep you alive by a great deliverance...He kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterward his brothers talked with him."*

There was no blaming, no explanations demanded, only the voice of mercy and forgiveness. The way was cleared for Joseph and his brothers to be reunited and begin a new relationship.

#### 4. Forgiveness loosens the stranglehold of guilt in the offender.

Joseph's brothers would have carried their grief to their graves if he had not extended forgiveness to them. Forgiveness, undeserved and unearned, can cut the cords and let the oppressive burden of guilt roll away.

*"...in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."* Ephesians 2:7

If Jesus had not extended kindness to sinners, we would remain in the stranglehold of guilt. He made the first move toward us that made it possible for us to be reconciled to Him.

#### ✧ Reconciliation

To *reconcile* is to restore to friendship or harmony, or to settle or resolve differences. It is the doing away of an enmity, the bridging over of a quarrel. Reconciliation implies that the parties being reconciled were formerly hostile to one another.

*"Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."*  
Ephesians 4:31-32

To be reconciled, the Scripture above simply instructs us to *"Let all bitterness... be put away from you... be kind... tenderhearted, forgiving..."* But *how* do we let bitterness be put away? *How* can we change our own feelings about a wrong done? *How* do we forgive?

##### ***As an act of the will, we must***

Confess our unforgiving spirit to God; ask Him to forgive us and to fill our heart with His love (1 John 1:9-10).

If possible, go to those we have wronged, share God's love and forgiveness with them, humbly make confession, and ask for their forgiveness (Matthew 5:22-24).

Spend time daily with the Lord in His Word and in prayer (Matthew 6:33).

Ponder the meaning of the cross and the sacrifice Jesus made for your sins (Titus 3:3-5).

Ask the Holy Spirit to generate His love within your heart and give you the strength to obey and forgive others (Romans 5:5).

*"Forgiveness is not an emotion...  
Forgiveness is an act of the will, and the will can function  
regardless of the temperature of the heart."  
Corrie ten Boom*

*"Whenever I see myself before God and  
realize something of what my blessed Lord  
has done for me at Calvary, I am ready to  
forgive anybody anything, I cannot withhold  
it. I do not even want to withhold it."  
Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones*

*"The degree to which I am able and willing to forgive  
others is a clear indication of the extent to which I have  
personally experienced God my Father's forgiveness for me."  
Phillip Keller*

Six of the most powerful words  
in the English language,  
"I was wrong. Please forgive me."

It is awfully hard to forgive. It is harder not to forgive. If we do not forgive, we deny what Jesus has done for us on the cross. Our experience of God's forgiveness is directly related to our ability to forgive. A readiness to forgive others is part of the indication that we have truly repented and received God's forgiveness. A broken heart toward God cannot be a hard heart toward others.

Pride and fear keep us from forgiveness and reconciliation. Refusing to give in, or be broken, insisting on our rights, and defending ourselves are all indications that our selfish pride is ruling our life, rather than the Lord. If fears of *what-ifs* are consuming and controlling you, you need to pray for the faith to trust and obey God. Enemies are very expensive to keep. Matthew 18:21-35 warns that an unforgiving spirit will put us in an emotional prison.

*"The first and often the only person to be healed by forgiveness is the person who does the forgiving... When we genuinely forgive, we set a prisoner free and then discover that the prisoner we set free was us."*  
Lewis Smedes

*You can go to our website at [www.parentingministry.org](http://www.parentingministry.org) to download a 13 page Workbook that may help you or someone you know further in this area.*

*Parenting  
Is A  
Ministry*

Session Five

*God's Management Style*

# PARENTING IS A MINISTRY

## Session Five

## God's Management Style

### Training Is Twofold

1. \_\_\_\_\_ your children.  
Teach them the Word of God.
2. Raise them up to \_\_\_\_\_.  
Discipline your children.

### God's Management Style

#### **Marriage is an institution created by God.**

**Genesis 2:18** "And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."

**Genesis 2:24** "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."

**Luke 14:26** "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple."

#### **God established the authority. The husbands/fathers are to lead the home.**

**1 Corinthians 11:3** "But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God."

**Colossians 3:18-21** "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged."



**The husband/father leads as God instructs, not as a *dictator* lording over his family with a heavy hand.**

2 Timothy 2:24-26 “*And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition...*”

**The husband/father is not passive or uninvolved. He does not relinquish responsibility or authority to his wife.**

**Husband** (Webster’s New Int’l Dictionary, 1944)

- \* The male head of a household
- \* One who manages or directs a household
- \* Leadership and/or authority within the house

**Management** (Webster’s New Int’l Dictionary, 1944)

- \* To conduct and direct
- \* To handle successfully or cope with
- \* To conduct, guide, administer
- \* To render and keep one submissive
- \* To guide by careful or delicate treatment
- \* To treat with care, to husband

Fathers have supernatural influence.

A husband/father is not **better, more important, or smarter.**

By God’s design, husbands and wives differ. We must embrace these differences in order to complete one another.

**God’s Judgment**

**Romans 13:1-2** “*Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.”*

Resisting God’s order brings about God’s divine \_\_\_\_\_.

From creation forward this order has been established. God – Man – Woman - Children

Dad = \_\_\_\_\_

Mom = \_\_\_\_\_

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**Colossians 3:18** "...as fitting in the Lord."

**A wife is to submit to her husband's leadership unless his leadership is in conflict with specific Scriptural commands.**

**What if you have a blended family or the husband is not a believer?**

**1 Peter 3:1-2** "Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear."

- **Submission** – A voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility and carrying a burden.

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### **How Do You Know If There Is A Problem With Your Management Style?**

Read and ponder the following questions. The purpose of this exercise is **not** to find fault in your spouse, but to allow God to speak to **you** about your own weaknesses. Be aware that responding with resentment or pride will hinder you from yielding to the conviction of the Holy Spirit.

1. **Dad**, when your children are in your presence, do you discipline them?  
 Yes  No  Sometimes
2. **Mom**, do you consult your husband for input on all aspects of discipline?  
 Yes  No  Sometimes
3. **Dad**, do you listen to your wife's input on the emotional state of your children?  
 Yes  No  Sometimes
4. **Mom**, do you keep information from your husband, not informing him on everything regarding the children?  Yes  No  Sometimes
5. **Dad**, when mom says 'no' and the kids come to you, do you always consult with your wife before responding?  Yes  No  Sometimes
6. **Mom**, do you find yourself arguing with your children or teen, defending yourself and why you made a particular rule or disciplinary decision?  Yes  No  Sometimes
7. **Parents**, have you sat down together and agreed on the rules and disciplines you will use with your children?  Yes  No
8. **Parents**, do you disagree in front of your children over rules or discipline issues?  
 Yes  No  Sometimes

Answers should be : 1.Yes 2.Yes 3.Yes 4.No 5.Yes 6.No 7.Yes 8.No

## The Biblical View of Leadership

**A Father is one who serves, manages, and teaches.**

### **1. A Servant Priest**

**Ephesians 5:25, 26** *“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her. That He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word.”*

**Job 1:5** *“So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, “It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts. Thus Job did regularly.”*

### **2. A Teacher and Manager**

#### **Teacher**

**Ephesians 6:4** *“And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”*

He is to \_\_\_\_\_ them.

#### **Manager**

**1 Timothy 3:4** *“...one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence”.*

- To rule is to \_\_\_\_\_.
- He sees that his children are to \_\_\_\_\_.
- He is the main *disciplinarian*.

Today in most homes, the mothers are setting the rules and issuing the discipline.

Moms are missing opportunities to nurture.

In single-parent homes, the parent, with God's power, fulfills both roles.

Parenting is a Ministry  
**Parent Discussion Homework**  
(If married, complete and discuss as a couple)

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Remember when we read God's Word, it reveals our hearts, our lack of understanding, and our selfishness. God has used this time in your life to bring these truths and understanding to you. He did not reveal these truths to you to discourage you or to cause you to become hopeless, angry, or resentful but to show you His love for you and His will for you as a parent. You may want to use this time to ask for forgiveness for not following God's order in the home; either not leading as a husband, or not submitting as a wife. Trust the Lord and He will bless you and heal you.

1. Review Pages 31-34 in the workbook.
2. What did you learn about God's order in the family?  

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3. Go back over the *Management Style* questions on page 33 (1-8). Were your answers to those questions the same as your spouses?  Yes  No If no, why do you think you see it differently?  

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4. Review and pray about *The Biblical Roles of the Mother and Father* found on pages 36 – 40 of Session 5 in the workbook. Are there areas that the Lord has revealed to you that need to change? Write them below.  

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5. Now take some time and discuss them with your spouse. If one of you is feeling overwhelmed or insecure in making these changes, make sure you are willing to be patient with each other and take these concerns daily to the Lord in prayer together.

# Biblical Roles of the Responsible Father

## HOMEWORK

1 Thessalonians 2:9-11

(Review and discuss as a couple, if married)

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### **The responsible father works to support his family.**

*"...our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you." V. 9*

God's Word is not suggesting that fathers work to the point of neglecting their families, but rather to work responsibly, that the family would not be burdened financially. The responsible father is instructed to maintain a job in order to care for the needs of his family while not neglecting the priorities of a husband and father.

*"...for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children."  
-2 Corinthians 12:14*

### **The responsible father is a servant-priest over his family.**

*"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word."  
Ephesians 5:25-26*

Jesus is the High Priest over the church; likewise men are the priests over their homes. See Hebrews 5:10. A priest has the authority to perform the sacred rites or duties of a godly or religious institution. When fathers perform their function they are not only serving God, but their wives and children also.

### **Fathers, have you ever considered yourself to be a priest?**

You have been chosen and ordained by God to lead and serve as a priest over the institution He has created - your family. Quit looking at your inabilities and weaknesses and start looking to God's promises to you and His power and might that will enable you to accomplish the task He has given you.

### **The responsible father is a witness of the Christian faith to his family.**

*"You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you..." V. 10*

- Devoutly - *Holy, pious, sacred, dedicated to God.*
- Uprightly – *With integrity and honesty, just, uprightness of character and behavior, daily desiring to live life according to what pleases God.*
- Blamelessly - *Faultless, able to stand a critics' scrutiny.*

Fathers are called by God to be the spiritual leaders in the home and role models to their children. A father does not abandon his responsibility to his wife to disciple the children, but takes the authority as the priest in his home. A responsible father does not compromise in his speech, nor does he find pleasure in things that might stumble or offend his children.

**The responsible father makes time for the training, teaching, and discipling his children in the faith.**

*“...we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children.” V. 11*

- Exhort - *To call to one's side, to encourage.*
- Encourage or Comfort - *To inspire, support; console in time of trouble or worry, soothing encouragement designed to cheer up and to inspire correct behavior.*
- Implore - *To call or pray for earnestly, giving personal witness. Solemn, earnest entreaty, urging.*

To train is to *raise up to maturity or to disciple*. The responsible father does not neglect his God-given role nor does he delegate it to his wife, but takes the authority as the leader, shepherd, and servant in the home.

**The responsible father is a teacher-manager in his home.**

*“And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:4*

He is to train his children. Not to say that mothers are not to be part of the training. They are to be part of all aspects of discipline, but not the one ultimately responsible.

*“One who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence.”  
1 Timothy 3:4*

To rule is to manage. The father is to see that his children obey. He is the disciplinarian.

Fathers, what principles have you learned from 1 Thessalonians 2 that have most ministered to you about your role as a father? \_\_\_\_\_

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How does this biblical role differ from your current parenting style? \_\_\_\_\_

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# Biblical Roles of the Responsible Mother

## HOMEWORK

1 Thessalonians 2:7-8

(Review and discuss as a couple, if married)

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Because God places such high value on the family, and because He knew that raising children would be a challenging, and often overwhelming responsibility, He lovingly provided instructions for parents in His Word. The Bible is our parenting manual.

Parenting is a privilege! It is God's desire to bless the marriage relationship, in order that it would produce "godly offspring."

*"But did He not make them one, having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth."*

*-Malachi 2:15*

Though 1 Thessalonians 2:7-13 is instruction for spiritual parenting and discipleship (mature Christians helping young believers grow in the faith), the roles of the mother and the father in the maturing process of the child are clearly outlined.

As Christian parents, our desire for our children should, above all else, be that they become godly, mature adults. We should diligently pray for our children as the apostle Paul prayed for the young Thessalonica believers, that they would,

*"...walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory."*  
*-1 Thessalonians 2:12.*

### The Caring Mother

1 Thessalonians 2:7-8

#### The caring mother is gentle with her children.

*"But we proved to be gentle among you..." V. 7*

- Gentle = *Mild, peaceable, quiet, composed.*

Some women are gentle by nature, while others have a coarser demeanor. The word *proved* in this verse originated from a Hebrew word implying *a state of change, condition, or the passing from one state to another, to become*. By determining to yield daily to the Holy Spirit, He will cause us to become all that God calls us to be! A gentle mother *is not* out of control, angry, yelling, and judging.

*"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."*  
*-Proverbs 15:1*

### **The caring mother nurtures her children.**

*"...as a nursing mother..." V. 7*

- Nurse - *The act of nursing, suckle, nourish, train, something that nourishes, to supply with nourishment, to educate or foster, to further the development of someone of something.*

From the time of conception and throughout the life of the child, a mother is called to nurture her children. Obviously the methods of nurturing change with the maturity of the child, but a mother's heart should always be to nourish and build up her children. The role of the mother is to make her children feel secure in her love and acceptance, by her actions and her words. A nurturing mother *does not* use harsh words, ignore her children, or withhold affection from them.

### **The caring mother is tender with her children.**

*"...tenderly cares for her own children." V. 7*

- Tender Care (Cherish) - *To give heed to, to pay attention to, to minister, to soften by heat, to keep warm as of birds covering their young with feathers, to cherish with tender love, to foster with tender care." Vine's Expository Dictionary*

A caring mother always keeps her heart soft and tender towards her children, which is not always easy. It is easy for a mother to become hardened or calloused from disappointment, frustration, fatigue, or other pressures. A caring mother must continually be yielding to the Holy Spirit to guard her heart. A tender mother forgives her children and seeks their forgiveness when she has been wrong.

### **The caring mother displays affection for her children.**

*"Having so fond an affection for..." V. 8*

- Fond affection (affectionately desirous) - *A longing or yearning after, prizing highly.*

Nurturing, care, and fond affection require touch. A mother must affirm her children with hugs, kisses, encouraging words, and other appropriate displays of affection. An affectionate mother *knows* her children individually and studies how to make each child feel special by baking a cake, leaving notes in their lunches, or doing individual activities with them.

### **The caring mother gives of herself in order to do what is best for her children.**

*"...well pleased to impart to you the gospel of God but also our own lives..." V. 8*

The caring mother understands that her priority is to place the loving and training of her children before her own needs. She loves her children with God's *supernatural* love, despite the mistakes, failures, and sin nature of her children.



Mothers, what principles have you learned from 1 Thessalonians 2 that have most ministered to you about your role as a mother?

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How does this biblical role differ from your current parenting style?

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# Starting over with God's Management Style HOMEWORK

(Review and discuss as a couple, if married)

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God's Word can be sobering. As we recognize where we are in comparison to where we *ought to be*, there is the temptation to judge and accuse one another or become discouraged and hopeless about our situation.

Be encouraged! God is able to accomplish in and through us what we are incapable of doing in our own strength and wisdom. God will be faithful to intercede, mend, and bless, but you must be obedient and take the following steps.

1. Confess your faults, failures, and sins to the Lord. As you are transparent and honest with God, He will faithfully forgive and restore.

*"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

- 1 John 1:9

2. Go to those whom you have wronged (spouse and/or children), confess your failures, lack of understanding, or sin. Then pray together, recommitting your home to the Lord.

*"...confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed..."*

- James 5:16

3. Establish a daily habit of personal and family devotions (prayer and reading the Word of God).

*"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."*

- Matthew 6:33

4. Ask the Holy Spirit to fill your heart with the kind of love you need to minister to others in your home.

*"...the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."*

- Romans 5:5

*"If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them."*

- John 13:17

*Parenting  
Is A  
Ministry*

Session Six

*Discipling Your Children*

# PARENTING IS A MINISTRY

## Session Six

## Discipling Your Children

### The Two Components of Training

#### Discipleship and Discipline

#### Part I - Discipleship

Remember Session Two, *A Strong Foundation*.

**Deuteronomy 6:7-9** *"You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."*

Teach them \_\_\_\_\_ to your children.

Be an \_\_\_\_\_.

#### **HYPOCRISY BREEDS REBELLION**

Parents must examine themselves.

**2 Corinthians 13:5** *"Examine yourselves ..."*

**Psalm 127:3-5** *"Behold, children are a gift from the LORD, the fruit of the womb is a reward. **Like arrows in the hand of a warrior**, so are the children of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them..."*

Parents must view their children as an offensive weapon or they will lose their perspective of discipleship.

**John 6:44** "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him..."

### When to Disciple Our Children (Deuteronomy 6:7- 9)

*"...talk of them when you sit in your house..."*

Parents must communicate God's Word to their children.

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*“...when you walk by the way...”*

*“...when you lie down and when you rise up.”*

**2 Timothy 4:2** *“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season.”*

**Colossians 1:10** *“that you may have a walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;”*

*“...bind them as a sign on your hand...”*

*“...frontlets between your eyes. “*

**To be an example for others and as a self-reminder.**

**Psalm 1:1-3** *“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.”*

*“...write them on your doorposts and on your gates.”*

**Joshua 24:15** *“And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”*

**Romans 1:32** *“who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.”*

**All things in the home, including music, cable television, television shows, videos, movies (rated?) magazines, board games, internet activity (pornography) and chat rooms.**

**TEACH YOUR CHILDREN GOD’S PRECEPTS & COMMANDMENTS**

- 1. Parents should continually evaluate themselves biblically and be faithfully obedient to Scripture in order to avoid hypocrisy when correcting their children. **James 1:22, Matthew 7:1-5**
- 2. Both parents should be one in mind and judgment. **1 Corinthians 1:10, Philippians 2:2**
- 3. Fathers (single-moms or women with unsaved husbands) should pray with their families daily. **1 Thessalonians 5:17**
- 4. Family Bible studies should be done regularly. **2 Peter 1:5**

**Keep in mind the following:**

- A. **Keep it simple!**  
The objective is to instill God’s Word in your children’s hearts. You are not trying to produce Bible scholars!
- B. **Keep it short.**  
All families have different attention spans, be sensitive to that fact in order to keep Bible studies a fun family time rather than a lecture.
- C. **Make it exciting.**  
Your love and excitement for your faith will transfer to your children. You can use Bible games, stories, videos, etc.
- D. **Be flexible.**  
All families experience unexpected events and schedule changes (child’s sports, school activities, etc). If necessary, re-schedule your Bible study night to an alternate day to accommodate changes. Don’t be so rigid that you become legalistic.
- E. **Be consistent.**  
While flexibility is sometimes a necessity, you must be consistent with your Bible studies, thereby maintaining balance.
- F. **Be realistic with your expectations.**  
Teaching your children about God should occur over a lifetime. Remember that you are sowing seeds now. There may not be a harvest time quite yet!
- G. **Don’t put off starting!**  
Change can be uncomfortable. You may be nervous or afraid that it won’t go the way you’ve planned. Review the points above and get started. You can develop your program as you go; personalizing the Bible study for your particular family.

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Parenting is a Ministry  
**Discipling Your Children – A Personal Evaluation**  
**Parent Discussion Homework**

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1. List the Biblical truths and/or parenting principles that the Lord has revealed to you (or reminded you of) in this lesson.

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2. Review *Deuteronomy 6:7-9* again. Discuss and describe the elements of discipling your children according to this passage.

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3. Take a moment to ponder *Psalms 1:1-3*. Does this describe your life?  Yes  No  
Explain \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Write out your commitment to make changes where needed and to diligently disciple your children.

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- Pray, asking God to help you follow through and get started.
- Choose the most convenient night of the week.
- Commit to a starting date.
- Tell your kids about the family Bible study night.
- Get started, remain consistent, and watch God bless your family!

# Eliminating Inappropriate Entertainment

## Parent Discussion Homework

(Review and discuss as a couple, if married)

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1. Make a list of the music, videos, video games, magazines, posters, television programs, books, and other forms of entertainment that you and/or your children are currently enjoying that need to be eliminated. A simple question that will help you sort through this exercise is: *If Jesus visited your home today, do you believe He would approve of these materials?*

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

2. Do you need to make some changes in your home in this area?  Yes  No
3. Write out your commitment to make changes where needed and to diligently disciple your children on the subject of appropriate forms and content of entertainment.

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### Effecting Change

Parents should be careful ***not*** to act impulsively or like tyrants in an effort to make these changes. Parents should ***not*** go through their teen's bedroom with a vengeance, tearing posters off the walls and destroying music. Your children should be approached with love, humility, and without anger or arrogance.

If you have previously allowed inappropriate entertainment in your home, take the following steps:

- Pray and seek the LORD'S guidance and wisdom.
  - Discuss and agree as a couple on what items should be discarded.
  - If your child has purchased these items with their own money, with either your explicit or implied permission, you may, if applicable, offer to replace the inappropriate entertainment with reasonable appropriate entertainment of your child's choice.
4. Discuss together your plan of action on how, **together**, you are going to make these changes. Write out your plans.

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# How to Teach Your Children God's Precepts & Commandments

## HOMework

(Review and discuss as a couple, if married)

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- A. Parents should continually evaluate themselves biblically and be faithfully obedient to Scripture in order to avoid hypocrisy when correcting their children. Remember to practice forgiveness. God knows that we will fall short. The key is to surrender to His will and purpose daily. Many parents are practicing bad habits daily, but do nothing about it.

*"But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves." James 1:22*

- B. Parents should be unified, one in mind and judgment, if possible. If a spouse is an unbeliever, the believing parent can lead in this area.

*"Fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Philippians 2:2*

- C. Christian fathers should pray with their spouses and children every day. Single mothers or women with unsaved husbands can initiate prayer with children.

*"Pray without ceasing." 1Thessalonians 5:17*

- D. Parents should lead in regular family Bible studies, at least once weekly, and help their children develop a daily personal devotional time. Father and mother can split up the duties. For example: mom with younger ones and dad with teens.

*"But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge." 2 Peter 1:5*

### **In leading Bible studies with your children, keep in mind the following points:**

- 1) **Keep it simple** - Your objective is to instill God's Word in your children's hearts, not trying to produce Bible scholars!
- 2) **Keep it short** - All family members have different attention spans. Be sensitive to that fact in order to keep Bible studies a fun family time rather than a lecture. Starting small (15 to 20 minutes) and building from there is fine.
- 3) **Try to make it exciting** - Your love and excitement for your faith will transfer to your children. You can use games, stories, videos, TV, current events, etc.
- 4) **Be flexible** - All families experience unexpected events and schedule changes (important events, i.e., child's sports, school activities, etc). If necessary, re-schedule your Bible study night to an alternate day to accommodate changes. Don't be so rigid that you become legalistic.
- 5) **Be consistent** - While flexibility is sometimes a necessity, you must be consistent with your Bible studies. Don't discontinue, for instance, because your son or daughter wants to play sports. Make Bible study a regular part of your family life.

- 6) **Be realistic with your expectations** - Teaching our children about God should occur over a lifetime. Remember that you are sowing seeds now. It may not be harvest time quite yet!
- 7) **Don't put off starting** - Change can be a bit uncomfortable. You may be nervous, or afraid that it won't go the way you've planned. Review the previous points and get started. You can develop your program as you go, personalizing the Bible study for your particular family. You may want to purchase age-appropriate daily devotionals for your children, to help them develop a daily relationship with Jesus.

Remember that God has called parents to disciple their children. God blesses obedience; therefore we should not let our fears, pride, busyness, or our inability stand in the way of our obedience. Trust God and get started!

# **Recommended Devotional and Discipleship Books** **HOMEWORK**

(Review and discuss as a couple, if married)

## The Bible

Strong Foundation Discipleship Workbook by *Family Discipleship Ministries*

Meet the Bible by *Philip Yancey and Brenda Quinn*

Everyday With Jesus by *Greg Laurie*

Self-Confrontation by *John C. Broger*

Experiencing God by *Henry Blackaby*

Drawing Near by *John F. MacArthur*

My Utmost for His Highest by *Oswald Chambers*

The One Year Book of Psalms by *William J. Petersen and Randy Petersen*

Streams in the Desert by *Mrs. Charles E. Cowman*.

## **Devotional and Discipleship Books for Children and Adolescents**

Favorite Bible Stories, grades 3 & 4 by *Rainbow Books*

Talksheets™ - Junior High by *Youth Specialties*

Talksheets™ - More Junior High by *Youth Specialties*

Talksheets™ - High School by *Youth Specialties*

Talksheets™ - More High School by *Youth Specialties*

God and Me! Devotions for Girls, ages 2–12 by *Legacy Press*

Growing Little Women by *Donna J. Miller with Linda Holland*

Youth Devotions by *Josh McDowell*

*Parenting  
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Ministry*

Session Seven

*Disciplining Your Children*

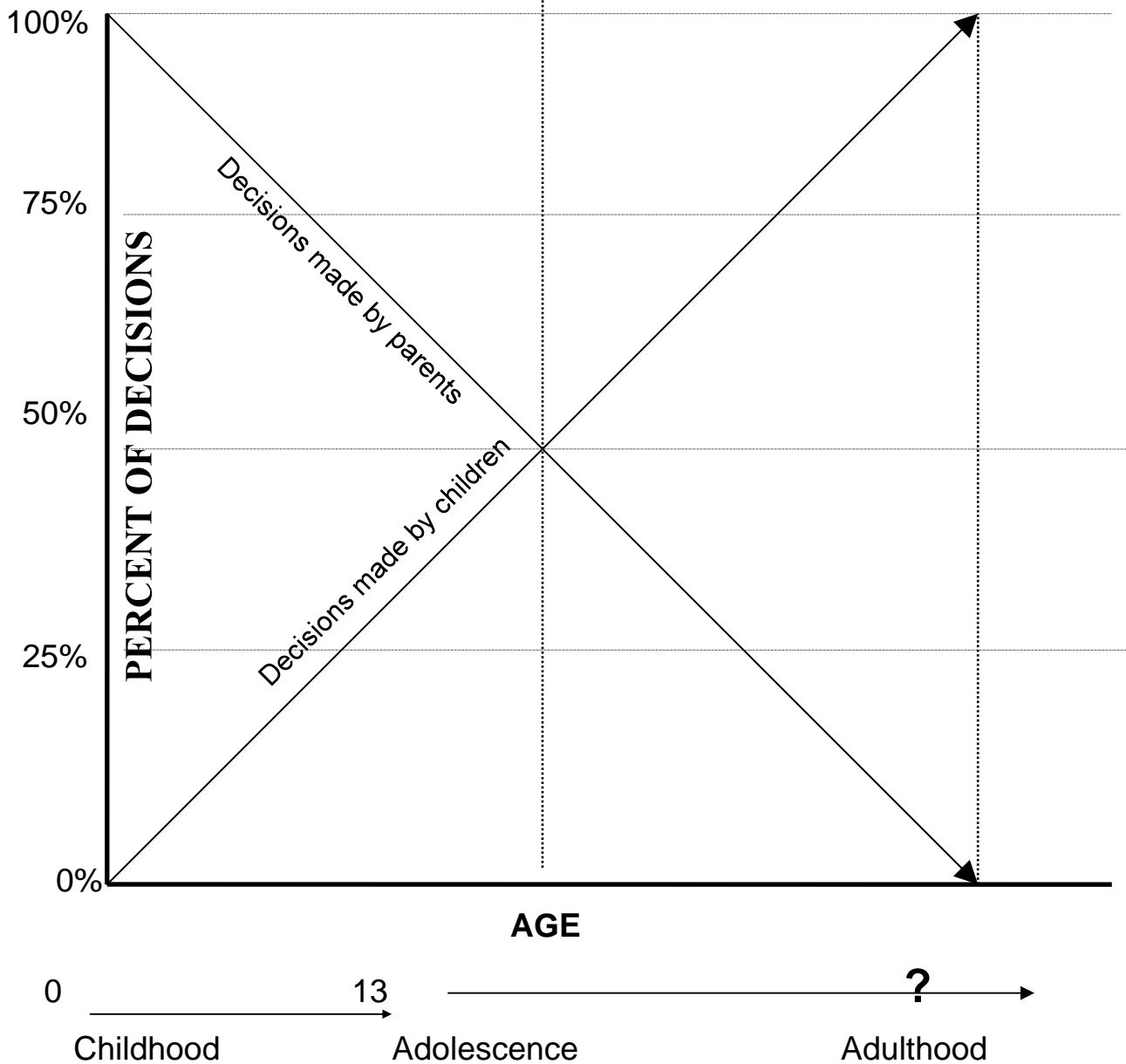
# PARENTING IS A MINISTRY

Session Seven

Disciplining Your Children - Training Up Your Children

## DISCIPLINE FOR RAISING ADULTS

PARENTS' DECISIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES GRAPH



**If you don't know where you are going you will probably end up there!**

## Training or Controlling?

- **Controlling** – *To exercise power over; to dominate or rule; a restraining force.*

A *Controller* is a dictator, not a trainer. He is one who will not accept failure, has an attitude that failure is wrong, and a direct threat to their parenting. A controller is motivated by self-fulfillment.

**2 Timothy 2:24-26** *“And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.”*

- **Training** – *To cause to grow as desired; to make or become prepared or skilled.*

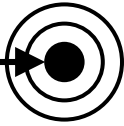
Like a small tree that has a certain bent or lean to it. You cannot straighten it out by force or it will break. The trainer must gradually and persistently keep pressure on it to eventually make it straight. A trainer is motivated by a desire for God’s best for others.

**Proverbs 22:6** – *“Train up a child in the way he should go...”*

## Disciplining to Maturity

**Ephesians 6:4** *“Fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”*

- **Bring them up** – *To bring up to maturity; to train or educate.*
- **Training** – *Discipline; chastening; correction; educative discipline (Vines Expository Dictionary says, “Discipline that regulates character”)*
- **Admonition** – *Instruction; warning; exhortation; any word of encouragement or reproof which leads to correct behavior.*



## The Bull's-Eye

1. \_\_\_\_\_ and Values (right and wrong)

**Genesis 18:19** "For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."

2. Personal \_\_\_\_\_

**Titus 3:14** "And let our people also learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful."

**Proverbs 13:4** "The sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied." (NIV)

3. Self- \_\_\_\_\_

**Proverbs 29:11** " A fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back."

**2 Peter 3:17** "You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness," (NAU)

Parents, have you set the goal for your kids?

**Proverbs 23:7** "For as he thinks in his heart so is he."

## The Four Tools For Training

- 1) Rules - \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Discipline - \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Punishment - A powerful \_\_\_\_\_ to accept training.
- 4) Consistency – Harmonious regularity or steady continuity.

## The Tools For Training Defined

1. Rules (boundaries)

**Deuteronomy 4:13-14** "So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone. "And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that you might observe them in the land which you cross over to possess."

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**Rules must be written out for the following reasons:**

**Deuteronomy 4:13** "So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone."

- 1) It eliminates confusion for both parents and children and gives clear goals.
- 2) Helps build and maintain unity between parents. Promotes a 'team spirit.'
- 3) Removes double-mindedness and unfairness.
- 4) Helps us to be consistent and more apt to follow through.

**2. Discipline (consequences)**

**Deuteronomy 11:26-28** "Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: "the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you today; "and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you today, to go after other gods which you have not known."

- **Train** – Instruct and control; to correct; mold or perfect.

**Parents must discipline their children because:**

- 1) God commands it - **Proverbs 23:13-14;**  
**Proverbs 22:6**
- 2) It demonstrates love -**Hebrews 12:6**
- 3) To raise adults, not children – **Psalms 32:9**
- 4) To keep peace in the home –  
**Hebrews 12:11**

**3. Punishment** - *A measured amount of pain to motivate.*

**Punishment does not include anger, yelling, cursing, or judging!**

**Proverbs 23:13-14** "Do not withhold correction from a child, for if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. You shall beat him with a rod, and deliver his soul from hell."

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**Hebrews 12:11** “Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”

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#### 4. Consistency

**How important is consistency?**




- No Consistency = No Rules
- No Rules = No Training
- No Training = No Peace!

**Know Consistency = Know Peace!**

**One of the reasons that parents do not like to write out their rules and disciplines is because it will hold them accountable to follow through!**

### How Do Children Think and Choose?

Let's Make a Deal

 <b>Door #1</b> Follow Rules	 <b>Door #2</b> Break Rules Accept Discipline	 <b>Door #3</b> No Rules No Discipline
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**Each child is unique in his or her own way.**

**Proverbs 22:6** “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

**Some children may need:**

- More discipline
- More boundaries
- Tougher consequences

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Parenting is a Ministry  
**Family Rules and Disciplines**  
**Parent Discussion Homework**  
*(This is an exercise only)*

1. Take some time as a couple (if married) and write out your current rules and the way you are currently disciplining. If you need more space use a separate sheet of paper. If there are any rules or disciplines that you do not 100% agree on together, put an asterisk beside them.

**Rule 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Rule 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Rule 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Rule 4:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Rule 5:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Rule 6:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

2. What has been the punishment you are using in the event that your child refuses to accept the discipline?

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Parenting is a Ministry  
**Chore List**  
**Parent Discussion Homework**  
*(This is an exercise only)*

1. Discuss together (if married) the chores you have given to each of your children. It's good to use another note pad or make copies of this sheet for this exercise. Write your child's name at the top of the page and then write out the chores and form of discipline used in the event they did not complete the chore.

**Chore:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Chore:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Chore:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Chore:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Chore:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

2. What has been the punishment used in the event the child did not accept the discipline for not doing the chore?

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\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Disciplining Behavior, Not Attitudes & Revenge versus Training

## Parent Discussion Homework

(Review and discuss as a couple, if married)

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There is a lot of confusion when it comes to how parents should deal with bad attitudes. As you read through the following worksheet, I believe you will get a better perspective on how you should deal with your children's bad attitudes. What to do and also what not to do.

*Attitude* – A posture or position; feeling; opinion or mood.

*Behavior* – The act or manner of behaving.

- Behavior is something we do or don't do, by either breaking a rule or not doing what is expected of us.

God gave us our emotions.

*“Be angry, and do not sin...” Psalms 4:4*

*Attitudes* stem from the heart. The heart of a child can only be changed through their willingness to accept our authority, to receive through us, the love of Christ and God's instructions for them.

*Behaviors* are changed through discipline or training.

- A rebellious heart is a miserable heart. It has no peace, joy, contentment, or lasting pleasure – all by God's design.
- If you know that your child is harboring bitterness toward you, or is rebelling against God's plan for their life, it requires your commitment to prayer and patience, without compromise. To compromise means several things for parents:
  - A) You allow a child's bad attitude to make you angry or resentful. You misrepresent God in the way you treat your child.
  - B) You allow the child's bad attitude to rob you of your inner peace.
  - C) You allow the child's bad attitude to dictate how you follow through with your agreed method of discipline either by not disciplining or adding to it.

We must allow our children to feel the way they feel.

In many cases children use this as a form of manipulation or revenge.

*Manipulation* - to control or play upon by artful, unfair, or insidious means, especially to one's own advantage.

- Some children will try to manipulate parents with attitudes so the parents will not follow through with a discipline. They will even premeditatedly attempt to set the parents up to guilt the parents into allowing them to do something they would not normally permit them do.

- When children know that if they exhibit a bad attitude and it bothers their parents, this often prompts them to continue this behavior. This is our sin nature to get revenge. When their pouty, moody, or bad attitude provokes you to anger or sadness, you can be the one encouraging them to continue in this childish, manipulative practice. It takes two to play this game.

When we become angry, this gives our children satisfaction that is very damaging to his/her character development, your faith, and your authority. It is important to not show any emotion when disciplining or correcting our children. Stay to the discipline plan. If you don't respond in the way they want or, in other words, if you don't serve the ball back to them, they will eventually quit playing this game.

If you have been playing this sinful game for a while it may take some time to break the bad habit, for both of you. Be patient and stay the course and the Lord will have victory. **Remember:** if the bad attitude turns into a poor behavior choice such as: yelling at you, a bad word, kicking the wall, slamming the door, etc. then you discipline that behavior, not the attitude.

**Revenge means to inflict injury in return for an insult.**

The Lord has instructed us to train up our children, not inflict injury in reaction to their childish and foolish choices. Is our attitude one that wants to get even with them and/or hurt them in some way because they just won't do what we ask? This is our problem, not our children's fault. The Lord gave us these children and sometimes it is hard to raise them in the way He desires. If you have the wrong motive in the disciplining of your children, you should repent immediately and ask for forgiveness from both your child and the Lord.

- **Revenge does not train our children, but instead, causes them to become defiant.** This will lead to division between the parents and the children.

**Training = Discipline**

- Training teaches our children. It is fair and not motivated by anger or revenge. It transforms and shapes our children's character without destroying or bringing division.

Notes:

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Parenting is a Ministry  
**Disciplining Behavior**  
**Parent Discussion Homework**

1. Discuss together (if married) the Attitude and Behavior section on page 55 along with pages 58-59. Write out what you believe are the typical bad attitudes you see manifesting in each of your children (you may want to use a separate sheet of paper for this exercise). It is important for you, as a husband and wife, to be unified in your plan for dealing with this. Try to clarify the difference between their attitudes and what the behavior is that may stem from these attitudes.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Parenting  
Is A  
Ministry*

Session Eight

*Disciplining Your Children*



**Examples of Rules and Disciplines**

**Rule 1:** Respect parents.

**Discipline:** Time out (sit in a chair, not a corner).

The amount of time spent in time out should be equivalent to the child’s age. For example, a three-year-old sits for three minutes. Explain to them that their bottom stays in chair, and no scooting. If they get out, they are asking for the motivator – a spanking. See *Principles for the Use of Spanking*.

**Rule 2:** Bedtime (in their own bed).

**Discipline:** Spanking (no yelling).

Cover your bases – water, light, door open, and pray with them.

**Rule 3:** Pick up toys.

**Discipline:** Take toys away for one or two days.

**Rule 4:** Obey Parents (“No” means No).

**Discipline:** Time out.

**Principles for the Use of Spanking**

*Using a measured amount of pain to motivate*

*“No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”  
-Hebrews 12:11*

- 1. Choose ahead of time what behavior will be corrected with a spanking (Proverbs 6:16-19). Remember that punishment is given only when they refuse the discipline.
- 2. Spank in love. For punishment to be effective it must be in the context of a loving relationship; not accompanied with yelling, screaming, or making degrading or disrespectful comments.
- 3. Spank in private, away from brothers, sisters or other adults and children.
- 4. Be consistent. If you say you’re going to spank your child for a certain punishment, make sure you always follow through.
- 5. Talk with your child in a firm but loving voice and explain why punishment is taking place.
- 6. Affirm your love after punishment. Only hug if they want it.
- 7. Spank your child as soon as possible after he/she refuses your discipline, and use the opportunity to “motivate” your child to accept your training.

8. **Never** spank in anger or when you're not in control of your own emotions.

9. **Never** spank a child in a way that shows disrespect. Controlled in the buttock area and don't remove pants.

10. **Never** spank more than necessary. Remember to use "a measured amount of pain." If your child says, "that didn't hurt," ask, "Do you want another one?"

It is strongly advised that you have a pre-determined number of times that you will swat your child. For example: two swats. Do not let your mood or emotions at the time determine how many times you will swat them.

11. **Never** spank for childishness or messiness. Spanking should be for punishment if the child refuses the discipline.

12. **Don't** allow your child to manipulate you. If they try to divert a deserved spanking by accusing you of not loving them, or by apologizing profusely, "sorry, sorry, sorry," or vowing to "never do that again," don't fall for it. If you give in to this drama you will train them in the fine art of manipulation!

13. **Never** allow excessive crying, screaming, or yelling during or after a spanking. If this happens, put your child in their room after the spanking.

Explain that it is okay for them to be angry, but acting out their anger is not okay and requires that they have a time-out for a predetermined period. Put them in their room. The time will start after they have quit screaming.

*"Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death."  
Proverbs 19:18 (NIV)*

The command here is to *discipline* our children - a warning against parental passivity! A child guilty of wrongdoings should be chastened in the early years, while there is still hope for the child. To neglect such needed discipline may contribute to the danger of natural consequences accompanying the child's foolish behavior in which he destroys himself or even to capital punishment under the law.

**Should spanking be implemented with the hand or an instrument such as a paddle or wooden spoon?**

- I strongly recommend using the hand. Using your hand assures that you have more control over both where you spank and how hard you spank. Scripture repeatedly refers to the *hand of God*, referring to God's hand extended to His children in love and affection as well as intervention for His divine correction. See Ecclesiastes 2:24, Job 19:21, Psalms 20:6; 32:4, John 10:29, Acts 11:21 and 1 Peter 5:6.

When is a child too old for parents to use spanking as a punishment?

- I recommend that moms stop using spanking as a punishment when their child is too large for them to administer the punishment in a controlled manner. For example, if they have to struggle or wrestle with the child, it is time to use a more effective punishment.
- I encourage fathers to move away from spanking as a punishment by the time their child is 12 years of age; instead using *Shut Down* when punishment is necessary.

For further teaching on spanking, see our ministry web-site at [www.parentingministry.org](http://www.parentingministry.org).

*“As many as I love I rebuke and chasten, therefore be zealous and repent.”  
Revelation 3:19*

**Positive Reinforcement**

- Love is the most powerful motivator and the most powerful way to build self-worth, not gifts, or gimmicks.
- In Session Two, *Loving Communication* – we are to praise them because they are a gift from God. Daily practicing this.
- Good behavior is expected, not rewarded. Our love toward them and how we show it should not change because of their failures.

The parents' attitude toward their children's failures should be similar to when they first began to walk. As proud parents, we helped them, cheered them on, picked them up when they fell, and encouraged them to keep trying.

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# POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT HOMEWORK

## Applied Correctly

(Review and discuss as a couple, if married)

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Positive reinforcement is using charts, graphs, or some other system to record a child's behavior, accompanied with ongoing rewards for good behavior. It is not very effective for the strong-willed child or beneficial for the compliant child for the following reasons.

- Love, not gifts or gimmicks, is the most powerful motivator and the most powerful way to build self-worth.
- Parents should be daily complimenting and praising their children because they are a gift from God, not tied to performance.
- Good behavior is expected, not rewarded. Our love toward them and how we show it should not change because of their failures.
- It can be beneficial for parents to use *special incentives* for a child who is struggling to overcome a particular weakness or personal challenge, such as bedwetting or academic struggles in school. For example: a special outing with the child or a material reward if they put forth the effort and improve in a specific area, not an ongoing reward system for perpetual behavior.
- If you have a compliant child whose natural bent is to please mom and dad they will find this system very appealing. However, if they have a brother or sister who is not compliant, but has a strong-willed bent (the strong-willed child), they will begin to resent their compliant sibling and struggle with their own self-worth. They can easily become discouraged because their compliant sibling receives more gifts and/or affirmation than they receive from what they perceive comes more natural to the compliant sibling.
- A perpetual system of rewards for good behavior for even a younger compliant child can set the stage for an entitlement mentality within the compliant child as he or she grows older. Once the rewards are removed, or become unsatisfactory, the compliant child may rebel in an effort to manipulate the reinstatement or improvement of the reward system to his or her benefit. The child has learned to selfishly seek the reward first and the good behavior has become only a means to a reward. Simple chores may not get done if they are not accompanied by a reward. This is teaching the child to serve only when it has personal benefit for them.

The parent's attitude toward their child's failures should be similar to when the child first began to walk; proud and excited when they first stood on their own and took their first steps. When they fell, the parents lovingly picked them up and encouraged them to try again, confident that in time they would develop, mature, and learn to walk on their own.

*Parenting  
Is A  
Ministry*

Session Nine

*Discipline Box*

# PARENTING IS A MINISTRY

## Session Nine

## The Discipline Box

### The Discipline Box

Make sure your children understand the purpose and the contents of this Discipline Box.

1. Take an ordinary box, no bigger than a shoebox. Decorate it, write your child's name on it, label it, or leave it plain.
2. Write individual household and/or outdoor chores on small pieces of paper, fold the papers and place them inside the Box.
3. Make sure the chores are age-appropriate and can be completed in three to fifteen minutes.
4. For a discipline, have your child draw a chore out of the Box (make sure it is at random, don't let them choose the job). Parents can determine if the chore drawn is appropriate, for example, if they draw, *sweep the porch*, on a rainy day, or if they draw a chore that has already been done.
5. After the job is complete put the slip of paper back into the box to be drawn again.

### The Discipline List

If you have teenagers you can adapt the Discipline Box concept using a list rather than a box.

- Make a list of chores and number them.
- For a discipline, they do whatever is next on the list.
- Put your initials by the completed chore. When they finish the list they start over.
- Keep in mind the discipline should take between 10 to 20 minutes.



## The Discipline List

1. Vacuum a particular room										
2. Clean all mirrors in bath										
3. Clean sink and bathtub in bathroom										
4. Clean toilet										
5. Clean behind couch, silk flower in basket, & TV										
6. Clean up backyard – dog										
7. Mow the backyard										
8. Pull weeds in front yard for 10'x20' area or 15 min.										
9. Water back yard – 20 minutes										
10. Water front yard – 15 minutes										
11. Wash four windows inside and out										
12. Wash car										
13. Vacuum inside of car										
14. Sweep garage										
15. Clean out refrigerator										

### Four to Eight Year Olds

During this time the child's personality is beginning to develop and come out. All children are different. Their temperaments and personalities are not the same, so do not compare them. During this period they are beginning to understand the difference between discipline and punishment.

Try to use related consequences for discipline.

Example: **Rule:** Ride bike only in a specified area.  
**Discipline:** No bike for two days.

**Family meetings should be held on a regular basis.**

### Examples of Rules and Disciplines

**Rule 1:** Respect one another at all times – parents and siblings.

**Discipline:** Time out (5 to 10 minutes – use timer).

**Rule 2:** No fighting or verbal arguing.

**Discipline:** Time out (separate for 15 minutes – use the timer). The first one who talks to the other gets another discipline. Don't try to be the judge and jury every time.

**Rule 3:** No leaving the yard without permission.

**Discipline:** Room restriction for one day.

**Rule 4:** Clean up our own messes (toys, etc.)

**Discipline:** Time out (first have them help you clean up the mess).

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## Nine to Twelve Year Olds

If the foundation of training (rules and discipline) has been laid during the first nine years, the transition into adolescence will be smoother.

It is a good idea to plan to stop spanking your child by the time they are twelve. Some strong-willed children absolutely need to be spanked in order to get them to bend, but in most cases, by the time a child reaches 12 or 13, spanking should not be used as punishment.

### Examples of Rules and Disciplines

**Rule 1:** Respect one another at all times.

**Discipline:** Draw one item from the Discipline Box.

**Rule 2:** No physical fighting or verbal arguing.

**Discipline:** Apologize and ½ hour of Saturday work.

**Rule 3:** Be ready for school by 7:15 a.m.

**Discipline:** Be awakened at 5:00 a.m. the following morning or go to bed 1 hour earlier.

**Rule 4:** Clean up your own messes expediently.

**Discipline:** Clean up the mess and draw one item from the Discipline Box.

**Rule 5:** Return home by a specific time from an approved outing.

**Discipline:** Restriction for two days.

**Rule 6:** Telephone privileges until 9:00 p.m. (**with approval**).

**Discipline:** No telephone privileges for two days.

## Thirteen to Eighteen Year Olds

Kids go through a multitude of changes between the ages 13 and 15. This season of change is called *puberty*.

Physically, they are growing rapidly, developing their sexuality, and their strength increases.

Emotionally, they are becoming more independent. They are much more aware of the opposite sex, they have a strong desire to be accepted by their peers, and they begin developing close friendships.

Cognitively, they begin to think abstractly and symbolically, which means, in a nutshell, that they begin to think a lot like we think! They are able to see another person's point of view, they test the structure and values they were raised with, and they become more goal-oriented.

**Ecclesiastes 3:1** “To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven...”

**It is important that parents do not compromise in the following areas:**

1. Respect both parents and your authority over the home (*mouthy* to parents, *bossy* over siblings, telling parents what they are going to do, or demanding that parents get out of their room).
2. The morals and values you have established in your home, including your child’s personal interests/pleasures (music, TV, videos, other entertainment).
3. Training them. You can stop training when they become responsible adults or when they leave your home, whichever comes first.

**Examples of Rules and Disciplines**

**Rule 1:** Respect one another at all times.  
**Discipline:** Discipline Box or List.

**Rule 2:** No physical fighting or verbal arguing.  
**Discipline:** Apology and ½ hour of Saturday workday.

**Rule 3:** Be ready for school by 7:15 a.m.  
**Discipline:** Be awakened at 5:00 a.m. the following morning.

**Rule 4:** Clean up your own personal messes expediently.  
**Discipline:** Clean up mess and discipline Box or list.

**Rule 5:** Return home by a specific time from an approved outing.  
**Discipline:** Restriction for two days.

**Rule 6:** Telephone privileges up until 9:00 p.m. (with approval).  
**Discipline:** No telephone privileges for two days.

**Rule 7:** No driving in a car with a teenage driver.  
**Discipline:** One-week restriction.

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**PUNISHMENT**

**Saturday Work Day**

An effective punishment for a child who refuses to accept the authority left in charge (mother, step-parent, grandparent, babysitter, or guardian). Saturday work in ½ hour increments (1/2 hour worth of work). Parent determines a job that should take ½ hour and require them to do that job. If they have a bad attitude and choose to drag the work out for three hours, let them!

**Driver’s License**

If your teen does not have self-control and respect for rules in the home, they are not showing the maturity and responsibility they need to safely operate a vehicle! Parents have the power through the DMV to revoke the license of their minor child. Parents must determine the expected goals and time frame and communicate these expectations to their child.

**Shut Down**

If your child refuses the discipline, an effective punishment is *Shut Down*. *Shut Down* means that your child has no privileges; no television, telephone, music, or friends over, and may include being confined to their bedroom. Their only freedoms will be to go to school or church, eat meals, and use the restroom. This continues until they are willing to accept the discipline. *Shut Down* can last for five minutes or five days. It is up to them.

**CHORES**

Giving kids responsibilities provides a great opportunity to train them, teach them work ethics, and promote unity, belonging, and mutual responsibility within the family structure.

**Five Important Ingredients For Success**

- 1. Make them fair.
- 2. Make them age-appropriate.
- 3. Write out the chores.
- 4. Determine and write out when the chores are to be completed (day and time).
- 5. Train - don't nag!

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**IPOD/Stereo/Radio/TV:** If a rule has been defined for type of music or show that can be listened to or watched & if the rule is broken the pre-determined discipline can be no IPOD/Stereo/Radio/TV for 5 days.

IPOD/Stereo/Radio/TV: Remove from room (removal of speakers eliminates removing entire stereo).

**Restriction:** If you have a rule – be home by a certain time & if broken the pre-determined discipline can be 5 days restriction (meaning no friends over or your child not leaving the house for any friends/activities).

Restriction: No leaving the house (going to friend's house, going out in the evenings), no TV, phone, etc.

**Money/Allowance:** I suggest that if a child is in the *Shut Down* mode or punishment mode for not accepting a discipline, then this should include any cash flow. Their chores still need to be completed on time but there will be no cash flow until the child yields to and does the discipline.

All of the above items can be used as part of the punishment or *Shut Down* consequence if a child refuses to accept and do the discipline. **Note:** As soon as the child does the discipline – the punishment is over and the items are returned.

## CONCLUSION

**II Timothy 2:24-26** *“And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.”*

**Ephesians 6:4** *“And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”*

## REMEMBER

- CLEARLY DEFINE BOUNDARIES – RULES.
- CLEARLY DEFINE DISCIPLINES.
- BE CONSISTANT!

# NEW FAMILY RULES AND DISCIPLINES Homework

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Rule 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Rule 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Rule 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Rule 4:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Rule 5:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Rule 6:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Rule 7:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Rule 8:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Rule 9:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Rule 10:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

# NEW CHORE LIST Homework

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Chore:** \_\_\_\_\_

Day \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Chore:** \_\_\_\_\_

Day \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Chore:** \_\_\_\_\_

Day \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Chore:** \_\_\_\_\_

Day \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Chore:** \_\_\_\_\_

Day \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Chore:** \_\_\_\_\_

Day \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_

**Chore:** \_\_\_\_\_

Day \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

*Discipline* \_\_\_\_\_



Parenting is a Ministry  
**Parent Discussion Homework**  
(If married, complete and discuss as a couple)

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1. Take some time to review this lesson and create your own **Discipline Box** and/or **List**. You *may* want to get your children involved with this exercise – it can be lots of fun to do together.
2. Make copies of the blank **New Rules** and **New Chores** list (pgs. 74-75) and complete them with what you have learned. I do not recommend having your children be a part of the discussion of what the rules and chores are going to be. This should be done by the parents only.
3. Discuss pages 63-64 in Session 8, *Principles for the Use of Spanking*. Is there anything that you need to change that you may be doing or not doing in this area? Remember: this is punishment, not a discipline so if you are planning to implement this as part of your training plan, it is to be used when the child refuses to accept the discipline (training). It does not replace the discipline. The discipline must be completed also. If, after the spanking, the child still refuses to do the discipline, he/she is to sit in a chair or stay in their room until they are willing to accept the discipline.
4. If you have older children – see page 77 – make a *Discipline List*.
5. Discuss together, if married, what form of punishment you are going to use for your children. Have a clear plan in place so you are not lead by your emotions in any situation. See page 78, *Punishment for Teens*, for some suggestions.
6. Here are some suggestions for age appropriate chores (disciplines) for children ages 6 to 12.

Vacuum Living  
Room

Empty trash in all  
Bathrooms

Dust Living Room

Vacuum Any  
Room a Parent  
Chooses.

Sweep the  
Kitchen.

Dust Baseboards.

Brush Dog or Cat.

Clean up Play/Toy  
area.

Dust Window  
Sills.

Sweep the Patio.

Clean Animal/s  
Dishes.

Clean up (tidy)  
Video/DVD area.

# The Discipline List HOMEWORK

(Review and discuss as a couple, if married)

*If you have teenagers you can adapt the Discipline Box concept using a list rather than a box.*

- ◆ Make a list of work projects that are not already part of your children's weekly or regularly assigned chores. These short work projects should be those that are not normally completed on a weekly basis, like spring or fall cleaning projects, or they can be those work projects that the parents do themselves on a regularly scheduled basis.
- ◆ Keep in mind the discipline work should take between 10 to 20 minutes.
- ◆ For a discipline, they do whatever is next on the list.
- ◆ Avoid making the list too difficult. Remember this is a training tool for teaching them the personal characteristics of a mature adult. This is not the parents getting revenge on their children.
- ◆ This list can be used when a related discipline is not applicable. For example: if your child is disrespectful, use the list. If your child comes home late, a related discipline of in-home restriction for 3 days can be used instead of the list.
- ◆ If you have a strong-willed child, you may need to consider having a large number of work projects on the list so that your child is not doing a discipline he/she has recently done.
- ◆ If the child does not perform the discipline satisfactorily, as you have previously trained your child, then inform your child that he/she is to complete the original discipline and be in *Shut Down* until it is done correctly. See page 71 for details on *Shut Down*.
- ◆ We recommend that the parent put their initial in the box after he/she has inspected the work performed by their child versus putting a check mark that any child can write.
- ◆ When your children have completed the list, start again at the beginning of the list.

## The Discipline List

1. Vacuum a particular room										
2. Clean all mirrors in bathroom										
3. Clean sink and bathtub in bathroom										
4. Clean toilet										
5. Clean behind couch, silk flower in basket, & TV										
6. Clean up backyard – dog										
7. Mow the backyard										
8. Pull weeds in front yard for 10'x20' area or 15 min.										
9. Water back yard – 20 minutes										
10. Water front yard – 15 minutes										
11. Wash four windows inside and out										
12. Wash car										
13. Vacuum inside of car										
14. Sweep garage										
15. Clean out refrigerator										

# OTHER PUNISHMENT SUGGESTIONS

## HOMEWORK

*The Motivator*

(Review and discuss as a couple, if married)

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### **SHUT DOWN**

If your child refuses the discipline, an effective punishment is *Shut Down*. *Shut Down* means that your child has no privileges; no television, telephone, music, or friends over, and may include being confined to their bedroom. Their only freedoms will be to go to school, church, eat meals, use the restroom, and do their chores and homework. This continues until they are willing to accept the discipline. *Shut Down* can last for five minutes or five days (or longer). It is up to them.

### **SATURDAY WORK DAY**

An effective punishment for a teenager who refuses to accept the authority left in charge in the absence of the father (i.e. mother, stepparent, grandparent, babysitter, or guardian).

- Have your child work on Saturday morning to complete tasks given. For example, give them a “TO DO” list to begin at 8 AM and they will be done when everything on the list is finished correctly. This is a great time to get those things done around the house you can’t seem to get to. If they choose to drag the work out longer than it should take, let them, but until all the work is done correctly, they are in that *Shut Down* mode.

### **DRIVER’S LICENSE**

Rescind license or permit (this can be done with written request from parent to the DMV). This should only be used if a child is rebelling against the rules and disciplines and is leaving in their car or your car. If used as a discipline – you must have a designated time period that it is taken away for and returned after that set time, not when their attitude is better.

*Parenting  
Is A  
Ministry*

Session Ten

*Starting Over*

# PARENTING IS A MINISTRY

Session Ten

Starting Over

## Step One - Confess Your Sins

**Proverbs 28:13** "He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy."

**1 John 1:9** "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

## Step Two - Ask For Forgiveness from Others

**Matthew 5:23-24** "Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift."

## Step Three - Forgive Others

**Colossians 3:12-14** "Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection."

## Four Points Of True Forgiveness:

1. Not keeping a record of wrongs suffered.  
**1 Corinthians 13:5**
2. Not gossiping to others about another person's sin. **Ephesians 4:29**
3. Not dwelling on the offenses of others. But restoring fellowship with the forgiven person, as far as is biblically possible.  
**Philippians 4:8; Romans 12:18**
4. Forgiveness is to be granted without limitation. **Matthew 18:21-22**

## **Setting Up the Family Meeting**

A. In a two-parent family, the husband and wife should meet first to pray over and agree upon the important points. Prayerfully write out the rules, disciplines and appropriate punishment and the chores for each of your children.

B. If one of your children has a serious relationship problem with either parent, the parents should meet individually with this child before the family meeting takes place. The purpose for this meeting is to humbly acknowledge the past problems and seek reconciliation with the child by asking for their forgiveness for the mistakes you have made. End this meeting by praying with your child.

**Note:** Give your child an opportunity to ask you to forgive them, but do not expect or require this of them. Most likely they are not yet at the place where they will acknowledge their error. Remember that you are the parent, and you are setting the example for them. As you follow through, your children will understand and take ownership, though this may take years! Be obedient and the Lord will bless you!

C. When you have your rules, disciplines, appropriate punishment, and chore lists written out set up your family meeting. Provide a copy for each child of their individual lists.

D. Begin your meeting with prayer, asking God for His help and guidance for your home.

E. Apologize (if necessary) to your children as a group. Ask them to forgive you for your mistakes, sin, and/or lack of understanding as a parent. Even if you have already said these things to your children individually, it is important that you communicate this to your entire family. This will show them your humility and true repentance.

F. Give your children an opportunity to voice their feelings, but do not require this of them.

G. Finally, explain the rules, disciplines, punishment, and the chores to your children. Make sure that you communicate to them that these changes are not taking place because *they* have been bad or done something wrong that has forced you to introduce *marshal law* as a *dictator!*

**It is important to help them understand:**

1. This system is biblical.
2. The difference between discipline and punishment.
3. The definition of a mature adult and that your God-given responsibility is to lovingly train them to become mature adults.
4. That the family is a team and everyone needs to work together so that the home will be a refuge and a place of peace for all family members.
5. The need and your desire for weekly family devotions. Let them know the day and time that your weekly devotions will take place.

H. Be forewarned that, if you have had very little structure in your home prior to this, your children will not jump for joy! Allow some grace on enforcing your discipline for the first two weeks, so that your children do not become overwhelmed or discouraged.

I. You may discover that some of your rules and disciplines were unfair or too harsh. Be sensitive to God's guidance and don't be afraid to make some modifications or changes. When your children see that you are not unreasonable, and that your goal is not to become a dictator over them they will be more willing to cooperate.

J. The lists can be posted in a central area of the home (kitchen) or in your child's room. Some kids might find it embarrassing when their friends come over, so do not make an issue of where the lists are kept.

A family meeting should be held every two months for the first six months to review team efforts and make any changes. After the first six months, have a family meeting at least every four months.

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# *Parenting Is A Ministry*

## *Appendices*

- **Parent Self-Evaluation Checklist**
- **Parent's Questionnaire for Youth Turning Age 18**
- **Seminar Comments Form**



# **Parent Self-Evaluation Checklist**

*(Review and discuss as a couple, if married)*

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Now that you have established your parenting structure, which includes the *Four Tools of Training* enforced in love, you may experience times of defeat or frustration and begin believing that this parenting style does not work for your family. If this happens, don't panic and look to the world's methods! Don't fall back on old habits! Instead, use the following evaluation checklist to discern the true source of the problem.

## **Your Spiritual Foundation**

- How is your devotional life? Read *Psalm 1:1-3*. Would you use words like worshiping, listening, thanking, confessing, interceding, etc. to describe your daily communication with God?
- Do you read and meditate upon God's Word in a daily quiet time?
- Are you trusting God with your finances and giving tithes regularly?
- Are your priorities in accordance with God's desires for you and your family? Is the fruit of the Spirit evident in your life?

**Remember:** You must depend upon The Lord! The key is not your parenting methods, but a relationship with God!

## **Communicating In Love**

- Take the Effective Listening Self-Evaluation in *Loving Communication* (pages 18-19).
- Have you been reacting in the flesh to your children or responding to them in love?
- Take a moment and review *What Love Is Not* (pages 14-17). Are there areas where you need to improve in your communication or apologize to your children?

**Remember:** Your communication with and toward your child reflects the value you have placed upon them.

## **Training Your Children Through Discipleship and Discipline**

- The best way to train is by personal example. How are you doing?
- If married, are you and your spouse working together and supporting one another? How is your management style? Who is the main disciplinarian?
- Are you sticking to your rules and using **only** the pre-determined disciplines and punishment, or has nagging, yelling, empty threats, and inconsistency crept back in?
- Are you praying regularly with your children? Have you followed through with your commitment to have a weekly family Bible study?

**Remember:** God loves you and He loves your children. You must trust Him. He did not give you the wrong children. He has not given you a task beyond your ability to accomplish as you trust in Him and obey His will.

Has God revealed areas in your family relationships where you have drifted off-course? If so, follow the steps outlined below to get your home back on course.

1. Confess to God, acknowledging your weaknesses, mistakes, or failures.
2. Receive God's forgiveness. Allow Him to embrace you in His arms of love and grace.
3. Repent by turning away from your error and commit to walk in obedience to His will.

# Parent's Questionnaire for Youth Turning Age 18

(Revealing the parents' reality vs. the child's possible delusion)

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The following questions are designed for discussion with your child just prior to his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and/or for parents who have a child over 18 living at home. They are most effective when discussed in a relaxed setting, for the purpose of stimulating your child to think, and to encourage a more adult relationship with your child as they are entering adulthood. It will also reveal what they believe is going to change or has changed in their relationship with you and your support of them.

Give one copy to your child to fill out & one copy for you to fill out. Set a date and time when you will sit down with your child to discuss their answers and share your answers (reality) with them.

**1. At 18 what do mom and I owe you besides our love?**

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**2. Do you believe that the reason we help you the way we do is because we love you?  Yes  No**

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**3. Should we be doing more for you than we are currently doing?  
 Yes  No if yes, what should we be doing?**

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**4. Do we have the right to require anything of you in return for you continuing to live in our home?  Yes  No Explain.**

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**5. If you do not agree with something we ask or require of you what should you do?**

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**6. If you ignore our request and do something that we have made clear not to do, what do you think we should do? What should you do?**

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