

BIBLICAL PARENTING 101



Week 3: The Basics of Biblical Parenting (cont'd)

The Basics of Parenting in Ephesians 6:1-4 (cont'd)

Basic Responsibilities of Parents:

- 1) Exercise Loving Authority (implied by vss 1-3 and larger context)
- 2) Discipline and Instruction (vs 4)

Parental love and authority work together.

William Gouge says, “Love, like sugar, sweetens fear [respect], and fear, like salt, seasons love.”

Authority and the Battle of Wills

The basic impulse of sin is to be your own God, your own authority, to buck God’s authority and the authority of everyone else. When a sinner comes to Christ for salvation “they no longer live for themselves” (2 Cor. 5:15). There is a fundamental change of allegiance from self to Christ.

The Basics of Parenting in Ephesians 6:1-4 (cont'd)

Basic Responsibilities of Parents:

Authority and the Battle of Wills

Authority is the most important heart issue for every child. You are never just dealing with words and actions. You are dealing with the fundamental desires of the heart. It is essential to establish who is in charge early on, the moment the first signs of resistance occur.

Abusing authority is just as dangerous as no authority (See Matt. 20:25).
Children must experience both a FIRM and a GENTLE hand

REMEMBER: You are both (1) under and (2) a representative of God's authority (Eph. 6:4). Your responsibility is to put your home under the Lordship of Christ and point your children to Him. Otherwise, you "provoke your children to anger" and facilitate their natural bent toward rebellion. How you exercise your authority gives them a picture of God.

The Basics of Parenting in Ephesians 6:1-4 (cont'd)

Basic Responsibilities of Parents:

Discipline and Instruction

DISCIPLINE = Training in a structured environment that includes encouragement as well as reproof and correction (via disciplinary measures) when disobedience occurs.

Hebrews 12:4-11

⁴ You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin;

⁵ and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons,

“MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD,

NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM;

⁶ FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES,

AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.”

⁷ It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom *his* father does not discipline?

⁸ But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

⁹ Furthermore, we had ^[b]earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of ^[c]spirits, and live?

¹⁰ For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He *disciplines us* for *our* good, so that we may share His holiness.

¹¹ All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

The Basics of Parenting in Ephesians 6:1-4 (cont'd)

Basic Responsibilities of Parents:

Discipline and Instruction

INSTRUCTION = “To place or set in the mind” meaning to establish truth in the heart and mind. Of course, the Bible is our instruction manual.

Instructing our children includes helping them see why they act the way they do. They must see their corrupt hearts and be pointed to Christ. Therefore, fruitful discipline must be accompanied by instruction. We don't just dish out discipline, otherwise children will not understand the bigger spiritual issues that are at the heart of their lives.

The Basics of Parenting in Ephesians 6:1-4 (cont'd)

The Parent who Provokes and Exasperates their Children (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21)



While children are to be obedient to their parents, they are also to be respected as persons made in the image of God. Thus, they should never be manipulated, exploited, crushed or treated as less than they deserve. Furthermore, they need the right structures, routines, rules, etc. to flourish. Anger in children is provoked when a repeated ongoing pattern of mistreatment or neglect gradually builds up until a deep-seated despair, anger and resentment boils over into settled hostility and eventually rebellion if unchecked.

The Basics of Parenting in Ephesians 6:1-4 (cont'd)

The Parent who Provokes and Exasperates their Children

1) *Troubled Marriage Parent*. Lack of marital harmony. Husband and wife fight. Dad fails to love mom; mom fails to respect and honor dad. Husbands and wives usurping one another's roles. This is one of the most prevalent forms of provocation. Often mom ends up having unbalanced relationship with children and dad has unbalanced relationship with others or devotes inordinate time to something else (work, hobbies, TV, internet, etc.). The bitterness of the marriage rubs off on the children (Heb. 12:15).

2) *Proud Parent*. See them themselves as the sole/ independent unerring authority of their children. The proud parent says, "Do what I say, not what I do." If a child points out that a parent is wrong, the child can often be severely scolded or punished for not showing respect. Such parents humiliate their children, often in front of others. Proud parents are often blind to their own sin. Parents need to admit their sins and weaknesses, confessing when they have wronged their children or mistreated them. Nothing will gain children's respect more, than a humble parent willing to admit their mistakes and sins and seeking their child's forgiveness when they have wronged them.

3) **Controlling/ Angry Parent**. Authoritarian. “Lord it over those allotted to their charge.” My way or the highway. They are not like God who is “gentle, open to reason, full of mercy” (James 3:17). They are not “quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger” (James 1:19). Furthermore, children learn that conflict is dealt with by anger (Prov. 22:24-25). When the angry parent disciplines in anger, this is a serious source of provocation. If you are more upset that your child disobeyed you than they disobeyed God, then get control of yourself and reorient your perspective.

4) **Over-reacting Parent**. Overreacts harshly (with anger) in response to sin or even normal childish (naïve) behavior. Scolds children instead of speaking calmly, naturally. Also over-reacts in discipline (more severe than the sin/ disobedience warrants). A physically abusive parent is sure way to move children to rebellion. Sometimes disciplines a child for things that could not be characterized as sin—childishness, innocent mistakes. Also, parents like this tend to chastise or scold their children in front of others, shaming them (Matt. 18:15).

5) **Legalistic Parent**. Creates too many or unreasonable rules that a child could never expect to maintain (Matt. 15:8-9; 1 Cor. 13:11). Too restrictive of children’s freedom (Luke 12:48; James 3:17). Children need routines, schedules and structure. But if these are too ridged and over-bearing, then the child becomes beat down. More responsibility = more freedom to demonstrate their trustworthiness. Legalism often produces children who reject Christianity, embrace all kinds of worldly behaviors or ironically, they become legalistic themselves.

6) **Over-protective Parent**. The helicopter mom. Afraid to let them grow and experience the world. Too over-protective, micro-manage everything they do. Don't let them fail. Restricting their freedom unreasonably. Lack of trust/ questioning their judgment. Afraid they will get into too much trouble.

7) **Perfectionist Parent**. Like a Pharisee (Matt. 23:4). Put demands on children they could never meet, sometimes in non-moral ways (e.g., athletics, school grades, etc.). Pressure to excel. Overly critical. Always finding fault (Prov. 19:11). Conveys perfection in themselves (hypocrisy). Communicating that you are always right, never admit sin, or seek forgiveness, say one thing but do another, double standards – one for children, another for parents. Expresses no joy or praise in children's accomplishments. Such parents also tend to major on minor, insignificant points while missing the big picture.

8) **Unloving Parent**. If there is any love, it must be a secret because they never show it. Cold, aloof, apathetic OR outright cruel and unkind. Make children feel unwanted (never have time for/ sacrifice for, etc.). Physically present but emotional absent, uninterested/ never have fun, laughing, playing, etc. Never offer praise or encouragement. No affection, hugs, kisses, etc. To say, "I love you" is too mushy, uncomfortable.

9) **Stingy Parent**. Lack of generosity (opposite of indulging—Spoiler Parent). Never let their child do things they want. Too restrictive. Stingy with gifts, money. No special things done for the child (e.g., birthday parties, vacations, etc.).