

4. DISCIPLINING AND TRAINING OUR CHILDREN

It's a manifest fact that we are creatures of extremes. Invariably we suffer from the peril of the pendulum. Too many parents assume the role of a Simon Legree. They nail the kid to the floor every time he speaks; they make a federal case out of every misdemeanor. Others become overly permissive, paralyzed by their child's behavior, scared to death to lay a hand on him for fear of permanently damaging his psyche. –Howard G. Hendricks, Heaven Help the Home

1. God has entrusted parents with the responsibility to pass on their faith to the next generation.

** You must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are away on a journey, when you are lying down and when you are getting up again. Tie them to your hands as a reminder, and wear them on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Deut. 6:5-9 NLT)*

** Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. (Eph. 6:4 NASB)*

** For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well. . . from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15 NASB)*

2. God has also entrusted parents with the loving discipline of their children.

** Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. (Eph. 6:4 NIV)*

** Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged. (Col. 3:21 NIV)*

** He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly. (Prov. 13:24 NKJV)*

** 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. (Prov. 22:13-14 NKJV)*

3. Just as God's discipline of us his children is motivated by love, so should the discipline of our children be carried out with love.

** Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the Lord your God disciplines you. (Deut 8:5 NIV)*

** For the LORD corrects those he loves, just as a father corrects a child in whom he delights. (Prov 3:12 NLT)*

** As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. (Rev. 3:19)*

** And have you entirely forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you, his children? He said, 'My child, don't ignore it when the Lord disciplines you, and don't be discouraged when he corrects you For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes those he accepts as his children.' . . . Whoever heard of a child who was never disciplined? . . . Since we respect our earthly fathers who disciplined us, should we not all the more cheerfully submit to the discipline of our heavenly Father and live forever? For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they know how. But God's discipline is always right and good for us because it means we will share in his holiness. (Heb. 12:5-7, 9-10 NLT)*

4. God expects that Christian leaders will manage their children and households well.

** He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity . . . Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. (1 Tim. 3:4, 12 NASB)*

** Having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. (Titus 1:6 NKJV)*

5. Parents who faithfully discipline their children often reap a rich blessing.

** Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul. (Prov. 29:17 NIV)*

** Discipline your children while there is hope. If you don't, you will ruin their lives. (Prov. 19:18 NLT)*

** Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her. (Prov. 31:28 NIV)*

6. Failure to obey parents is foolish and can lead to heartache.

** A fool despises his father's instruction, but he who receives reproof is prudent. . . A wise son makes his father glad, but a foolish man despises his mother. (Prov. 15:5, 20 NKJV)*

** He who curses his father or his mother, his lamp will go out in time of darkness. (Prov. 20:20 NKJV)*

** The eye that mocks a father and scorns a mother, the ravens of the valley will pick it out, and the young eagles will eat it. (Prov. 30:17 NASB)*

** You should also know this,, Timothy, that in the last day there will be very difficult times. For people will be . . . disobedient to their parents. (2 Tim. 3:1-2 NLT)*

7. God requires that children obey their parents in the Lord.

** Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old. (Prov. 23:32 NKJV)*

** Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother’—which is the first commandment with a promise—‘that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.’ (Eph. 6:1-3 NIV)*

** You children must always obey your parents, for this is what pleases the Lord. (Col. 3:20 NLT)*

PRAYER

Lord, I do not always appreciate your chastening not in my life. Neither do my children always respond with appreciation to my human attempts to provide instruction and correction in their lives. O God, it would be so much easier if children could raise themselves! But that was never your plan.

Remind me when the going is rough that parenting is not a popularity contest. By your grace, enable me to discipline in love, to listen, to encourage, to instruct, and to share God intimately with my family. I want my children to know they are not an intrusion into my life but are cherished gifts from God. When discipline is required, help me to show my children the same spirit of love and forgiveness you have shown me.

PROMISE

Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul. (Prov. 29:17 NIV)