

A Bible Plan for Parents (Part 2)

Introduction:

1. Being a parent is a wonderful privilege, but an awesome responsibility. As parents, we are literally shaping and molding a human life that will affect countless other lives. The principles we instill in our children will be carried with them the rest of their lives.
2. There are no second chances. Most things in life, you can make right, or go back and undo it, or get another chance. Not so with child-rearing. We have one shot at raising our children, and we want to make sure we do the best job we can.
3. But what is a “good” parent? What does a good parent do? How does one act? There is an on-going battle for our children’s minds. Satan desires to bring them into bondage and destroy their lives. What can a parent do?
4. I want to focus on some positive actions that we, as parents, can implement in our homes. These principles are absolutely crucial if our children are to grow up to love the Lord.

First, our children need a Christ-centered home.

Second, our children need a home that is full of love and forgiveness.

Third, our children need godly discipline.

1. In many homes, the parents think their child is so cute that they cannot bring themselves to discipline their child. They become the “permissive parents.”
 - But at about twelve years old, the child begins to seek his own identity and do his own thing. The parents get scared, they try to pull in the reins and attempt to control the behavior of the child.
 - But the child is so used to getting his own way, he rebels, and a power struggle begins. Everything flies apart, and the parents call the pastor or counselor for help.
 - What happened? What went wrong? The child never received the discipline he needed. Parents, you must realize the fact that you are not the only influence in your children’s lives. In fact, once they are sent to school, you are no longer even the predominant influence.
 - So, especially from birth to five years old, you have an important job to do, because at this point you have the greatest influence.
2. You must break that stubborn and rebellious will that all children have. You must establish boundaries of behavior and teach the child to stay within those boundaries. If not, you will most likely produce a self-willed, rebellious, and obstinate teenager that will not have the proper respect for your parental authority. Hebrews 12:7
 - Parents say, “But it is so hard to discipline my child.” When your child rebels, ask yourself, “Is God pleased? Is the Holy Spirit controlling my child?”

- Your job as the spiritual leader of your home is to insure that the Spirit of God is ruling your household. You are to quench all attempts of Satan to get a foothold in your home. You cannot allow Satan to control your home through rebelliousness and disobedience in your child. Proverbs 22:15
3. What does the Bible teach about discipline?

Discipline is not punishment. Hebrews 12:11

- Punishment is past-oriented. It is paying your child back for hurting you in some way. “You ruined my day, so I’m going to ruin yours.” The motive is revenge.
- Discipline is future-oriented (Hebrews 12:11). When children do something wrong, we discipline them so they won’t do it again. Discipline helps them to make wiser choices in the future. Proverbs 29:15

Discipline is not judgment. Hebrews 12:10

- Discipline is related to behavior. Judgment is related to character.
- Discipline is not character assassination. When you call your child, “stupid, dumb, clumsy, lazy, slob, brat, etc.,” you crush the spirit. Ephesians 4:29
- When you attack their character, there is nothing they can do about it. They cannot change it on the spot.
- But, when you confront their behavior, there is something they can do about that. They can confess it and choose to change. They don’t feel rejected and wounded in the process.

Discipline must be administered in love. Hebrews 12:6

- It is harder for your child to look into the eyes of love when he is guilty than to look into eyes of vengeance. It’s those eyes of love that will mold his future.
- Before, during, and after you discipline your children, you should convey your unconditional love for them. Even more than knowing you disapprove of their behavior, they should know you love them. Proverbs 27:5-6
- Parents who maintain firm discipline while demonstrating genuine love will usually have well-adjusted children that are prepared to make wise choices in life. Proverbs 13:18, 15:32

When you discipline, never lose control.

- In a typical scenario, Mom keeps warning over and over again, until finally she loses it, and lashes out in anger and frustration. Discipline becomes a deed of the flesh instead of the Spirit. “*Be ye angry and sin not...*”
- You must take action before you lose self-control, and the best way to do it is not to give any warnings. Act decisively and swiftly in love.

One other side note: Discipline with each of your children may vary.

- Each child is unique and different. What works for one may not work for another.
- Disciplining each child in the same way is not what makes you a fair parent. Holding the same standards and values for each child is what makes you fair.

- This brings me to my next major point.

Fourth, our children need acceptance for who they are.

1. Our society is into comparisons in a big way. The emphasis is on performance and appearance. This is not wise. 2 Corinthians 10:12
2. Each child must be accepted for he is and encouraged to celebrate his own uniqueness as a child of God. But many times, we as parents try to make our children fit into a mold we have created.
 - We want them to be what we were, what we wish we would have been, or to have the same interests we had.
3. Your children must feel that they can trust you and communicate with you. If we constantly communicate judgment and criticism, they won't feel comfortable sharing their spiritual problems with us. This spells trouble. But, if they know we will respond with love, trust, and respect, no matter what they tell us, they will open right up.
4. You must communicate acceptance and trust, and give your children something to live up to – see the potential in them. **Illustration:** Jesus stuck with Peter after Peter betrayed Him and denied Him. Would you have stuck with Peter and showed confidence in him?

Fifth, our children need to be taught the power of prayer.

1. It has been said that Satan believes in prayer, not because he practices it, but because he suffers from it. We must help our children recognize the invaluable resource for resisting the devil that is available to them – prayer. Hebrews 11:6
2. The best way to learn is by your example. Prayer will become significant to them as they see it modeled in your life.
3. Pray together at meal time, pray at night before going to bed, and pray consistently for each of your children. As a parent, your children should be at the top of your prayer list.

In Conclusion:

1. Parents, what good are our accomplishments or the money we make if we lose our own children to Satan? Relationships are more important to God than accomplishments.
2. There are no guarantees in parenting because each child has a free will to make choices in life. But, you can increase the odds by doing what we have seen from God's Word. Then, if they do rebel, they will have no excuse, and you will have no regrets.
3. Remember this: if our achievements in life don't enhance our relationships with God, our spouse, and our children, then what have we really accomplished? We are missing out on the true meaning of life.