

Biblical Parenting

Ephesians 6:1-4

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), 3 “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.” 4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Psalms 127:1,3-5

“Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.....Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one’s youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.”

Parenting seems to be the one topic in our culture that everyone has an opinion about. We all feel our own parenting style is superior to everybody else’s.

I am certainly not immune to this.

We have all been in a social situation where we think to ourselves, “why don’t those people make their kids behave?”

Of course, the moment I begin to think that way my own kids go crazy and completely ignore whatever I am trying to teach them!

We live in a culture that professes to love kids and value parenting. But when you look at the way the typical American lives his and her life, the upbringing and nurturing of children does not seem to be much of a priority.

Careers, outside relationships, entertainment, hobbies, and materialism too often take precedence over parenting in everyday life.

Just as selfishness has sabotaged marriage it has also destroyed many parent/child relationships. Particularly destructive is the fact that these mindsets are typically taught to the next generation of parents, creating a vicious cycle.

The antidote to our culture’s destructive ways of parenting is to saturate our families with the Bible. Here we can see the beauty, value, and eternal rewards that come from bringing up children to know and love God.

The whole lifestyle of being a parent is itself tiring, humbling, thankless, and far beyond the realm of “expert opinions.” God’s Word teaches, however, that when parenting is done in glad submission to Christ, the end result is more fruitful and rewarding than anything else we could ever do with our lives.

The fruit of parenting is harvested in the lives of the children, the parents, and society as a whole.

Keep in mind that the Bible does not teach many methods for being a parent (although there are a few, such as the loving use of the physical discipline, instructing in the Bible, and worshipping with your children). Methods often change by culture and life situation.

What the Bible mostly gives us are rock solid principles for effective parenting. Principles never change. They hold tried and true wisdom for how to raise a successful generation of kids who know and love God.

Discussion Questions

- What are some principles of parenting that you have read in the Bible?
- How do you implement those principles in your methods of parenting?
- Have you ever had to change how you parent?
- Why are honor and obedience (Ephesians 6:1-2) so critically essential for your children to learn?
- How do you teach your children to honor and obey?
- What do honor and obedience teach children about God?
- How do parents stand in the way of their children knowing God?
- How do parents make it easier for their children to know God?
- How does discipline and instruction contrast with provoking children to anger (Ephesians 6:4)?
- What is the role of a father in teaching children to be self-controlled?
- What is the role of a mother in teaching children to be independent?
- How is your home like a mini-church?
- Can you characterize your home life as “loving God and having fun together?”