

## **Introduction:** These are difficult days in which to raise children

*Children are a gift from the Lord...*

Psalm 127:3 (NLT)

- Your child's world is . . .
- A parent's challenge is . . .
- The question we're all asking is . . .

## **Four principles for positive parenting**

### **1. Effective parenting begins with positive**

**CLEAR - CUT OBJECTIVES!**

*Fathers, don't over-correct your children or make it difficult for them to obey the commandment. Bring them up with Christian teaching in Christian discipline.*

Ephesians 6:4 (Phillips)

- The principle of focus
- God's Dream vs. The human dream for your child

2. Effective parenting demands we **PRACTICE** what we **PREACH**.

*<sup>14</sup>I am not writing this to shame you but to warn you as my dear children. <sup>15</sup>Even though you had ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. <sup>16</sup>Therefore I urge you to imitate me.*

1 Corinthians 4:14-16 (NIV)

- The principle of modeling
- “More is caught than taught”

3. Effective parents build relationships that **BOND**.

*<sup>7</sup> Instead, we were like young children among you. Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, <sup>8</sup> so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well.*

1 Thessalonians 2:7-8 (NIV)

*<sup>11</sup>For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, <sup>12</sup>encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into His Kingdom and glory.*

1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 (NIV)

- The principle of relationship



### 8 “Keys” that build relationships that bond

1. UNCONDITIONAL love
2. Scheduled TIME
3. FOCUSED attention
4. EYE contact
5. ONGOING communication
6. Meaningful TOUCH
7. Have FUN together
8. PRAY together often

4. Effective parenting requires **CONSTANT REPAIR** and **ONGOING MAINTENANCE**.

*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

1 John 1:9 (NIV)

- The principle of process
- 5 magic words = **I'M SORRY!** and **PLEASE FORGIVE ME!**
- It's never too late!

**Discussion Questions:**

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how positive of a parent are you?
2. Discuss which point was most helpful to you. Why?
3. Where do you need to focus some parenting energy? What specifically will the next step look like?

## Introduction: God's Dream for Your Child

1. You must understand your child's two primary needs are for **SIGNIFICANCE** and **SECURITY**.

- Two questions kids are always asking:

1. Do you **LOVE** me?
2. Where are the **BOUNDARIES**?

- The Perfect Parent

Genesis 1:27-29; 2:15-17

2. You must recognize your child's primary responsibility is to learn **OBEDIENCE**.

*<sup>1</sup>Children, it is your Christian duty to obey your parents, for this is the right thing to do. <sup>2</sup>"Respect your father and mother" is the first commandment that has a promise added: <sup>3</sup>"so that all may go well with you, and you may live a long time in the land."*

Ephesians 6:1-3 (GNT)

- Defining obedience: Obedience is teaching your child to come **UNDER** the hearing of your voice.

*Whoever has My commands and keeps them, is the one who loves Me. The one who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I too will love them and show Myself to them.*

John 14:21 (NIV)

3. You must remember, obedience is a **DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS**.

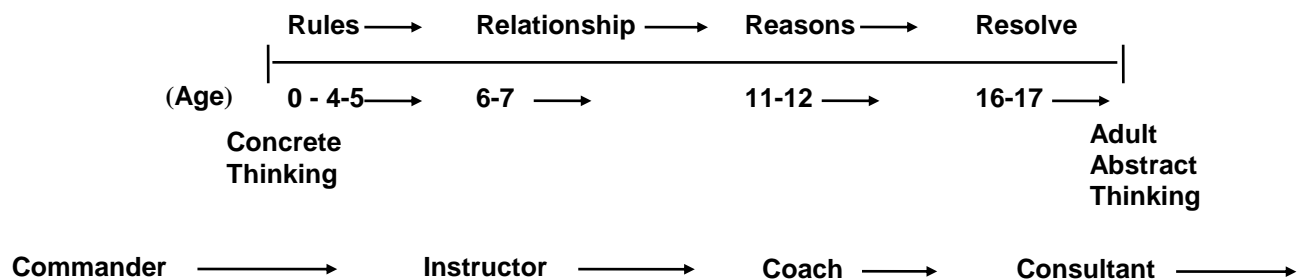
*Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.*

Hebrews 5:8 (NASB)

*And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.*

Luke 2:52 (NIV)

- Spiritual formation and mental development - \*Chart by Lawrence Kohlberg



- Knowledge axiom: Knowledge + Love + Wisdom = **CONVICTIONS**.
- 1. Principle of readiness - Only teach children what they are mentally and emotionally capable of learning.
- 2. Principle of responsibility - Never habitually do for your children what they can do for themselves.

*Parents, do not treat your children in such a way as to make them angry. Instead, raise them with Christian discipline and instruction.*

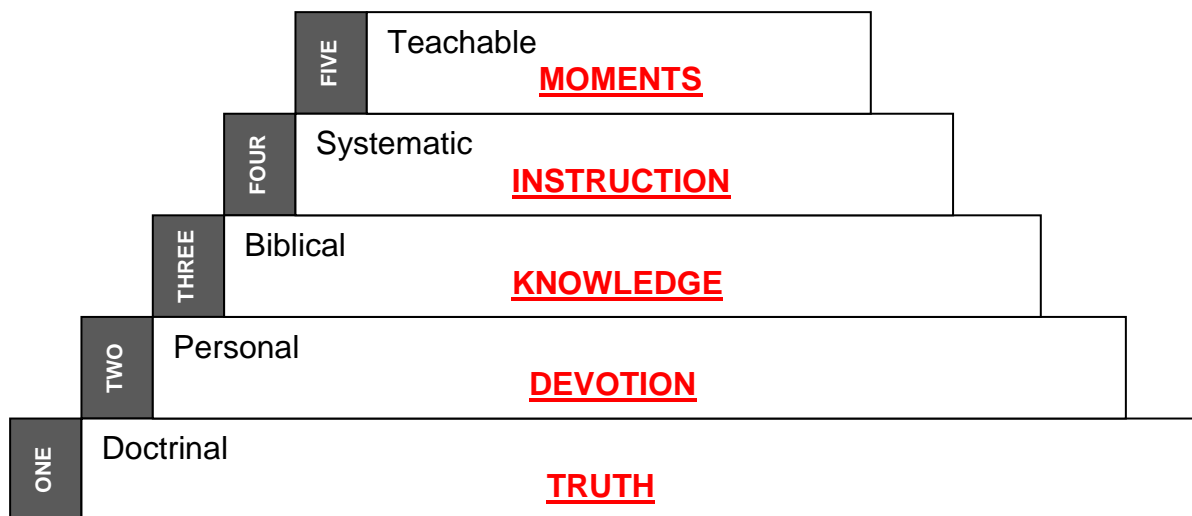
Ephesians 6:4 (GNT)

4. You must commit to providing the necessary **RESOURCES** for your child to learn obedience.

*<sup>4</sup>Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! <sup>5</sup>And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. <sup>6</sup>These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. <sup>7</sup>You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. <sup>8</sup>You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. <sup>9</sup>You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (NASB)

- Five resources your children need from you



- A word picture = “The Journey of Life”

5. Obedience is achieved when your child has **TRANSFERRED** his/her primary love, submission, and dependency from **YOU** to **JESUS CHRIST**.

- Three characteristics of righteous children

1. They make wise **DECISIONS**. Philippians 1:9-11

2. They keep their **COMMITMENTS**. Proverbs 20:6

3. They care genuinely for **OTHERS**. John 15:13

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What are your child's greatest needs?
2. What is your child's greatest responsibility? Discuss what that means and what that involves.
3. What is your role as a parent in helping your child learn obedience? Where is that going well? Where do you need help?
4. What was specifically helpful to you from this message? What step could you take to help your child reach his/her full potential?



## Introduction: “Five Smooth Stones”

God has been in the business of helping children defeat the “evil giants” in their world for a long time.

### 1. Teach them to suffer well

- A theology of suffering
  - Life is hard, but God is good!
  - Life is unjust, but God is sovereign.
  - Old Testament roots – Joseph Genesis 37-50
  - New Testament command 1 Peter 2:21-23
- Application: Help your child **GROW** through suffering.
- Life message: Suffering is **NORMAL**.

### 2. Teach them to work “Unto the Lord”

- A theology of work
  - Work is a “calling,” not a job.
  - All work is sacred.
  - Our work is to flow from God’s unique design and purpose for our lives.
  - Work is for one audience; the “audience of one.”
  - Old Testament roots Genesis 2:15
  - New Testament command Colossians 3:23
- Application: Help your child **DISCOVER** “God’s calling” for their life so they can impact their world and beyond.
- Life message: You were **CREATED** to work!

### 3. Teach them to manage their lives wisely

- A theology of stewardship
  - God owns everything.
  - God has entrusted to us “things” to manage for Him. (time, talent, treasure)
  - God expects a positive return on His investment.
  - God will hold you accountable.
  - God wants you to share in His joy.
  - Old Testament roots Genesis 1:26-28
  - New Testament command Matthew 25:14-30
- Application: Help your child to become **FAITHFUL** in the “little things.” Luke 16:10
- Life message: Your life is a **SACRED** stewardship!

### 4. Teach them to discern good from evil

- A theology of holiness
  - God is high, holy, “totally other.”
  - God is absolute truth.
  - God’s Word defines absolute truth.
  - God’s Law (morals) is for our protection.
  - God’s ultimate aim is to make us holy.
  - Old Testament roots Exodus 3:5-6
  - New Testament command 1 Peter 1:15-16
- Application: Help your child think **BIBLICALLY** and critically to develop personal **CONVICTIONS** and character.
- Life message: Teach them to make **WISE** choices!

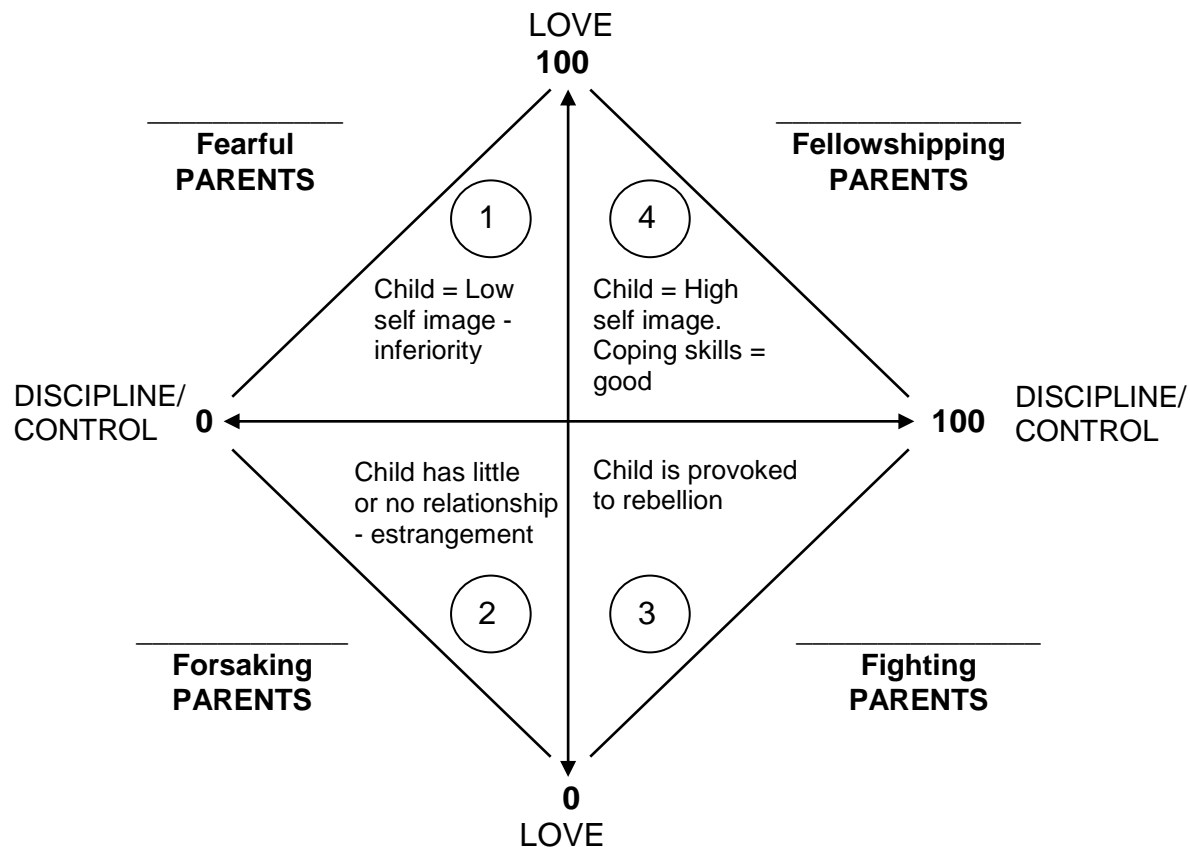
## 5. Teach them to live grace-filled lives

- A theology of grace
  - Grace is the unmerited and unconditional love of God toward us.
  - Grace is free to us, but costly to God.
  - The cross is God's greatest act of grace.
  - Salvation is a free gift from God.
  - Grace must be received - i.e. faith.
  - Grace produces *gratitude* toward God, and love toward others.
  - Old Testament roots Genesis 3:21
  - New Testament command Ephesians 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:13
- Application: Help your child realize that **FAILURE** is never final with God.
- Life message: You were created to **RECEIVE** grace and to give grace.

## Discussion Questions:

1. Which part of this message was most helpful? Most challenging? Most thought-provoking?
2. Why is it so important to teach our children to think biblically? To develop a Christian world-view?
3. What specific step would allow you to put one of these "smooth stones" in the sling of your child's life?

**Case Study #1** – Reuben Hill (Minnesota Report)



**Summary:**

The balanced authoritative parent, who gives high support (love) and high control (discipline), typically produces children with high self-esteem, good coping skills, and a positive relationship with parents.

## **Case Study #2** – Hebrews 12 - Christians A.D. 66-70

*<sup>4</sup> In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.*

*<sup>5</sup> And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says, “My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you,*

*<sup>6</sup> because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.”*

*<sup>7</sup> Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father?*

*<sup>8</sup> If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all.*

*<sup>9</sup> Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live!*

*<sup>10</sup> They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness.*

*<sup>11</sup> 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 12:4-11 (NIV)

### **Summary:**

Discipline is teaching **obedience** to God and His Word through **consistent consequences** (actions) and **clear instructions** (words) in an atmosphere of **love**.

### **Five characteristics of discipline:**

1. The **necessity** of discipline = To deter **DESTRUCTION**. Hebrews 12:4
2. The **means** of discipline = The **ACTIONS** and **WORDS**. Hebrews 12:5
3. The **motive** in discipline = To express **LOVE**. Hebrews 12:6-9
4. The **goal** of discipline = To teach **OBEDIENCE or SUBMISSION**. Hebrews 12:9
5. The **result** of discipline = Short term **PAIN** and long term **GAIN**. Hebrews 12:10,11

Knowing the difference between punishment and discipline:

	Punishment	Discipline
<b>Purpose</b>	To inflict penalty for an offense	To train for correction and maturity
<b>Focus</b>	Past misdeeds	Future correct acts
<b>Attitude</b>	Hostility and frustration on the part of the parent	Love and concern on the part of the parent
<b>Resulting emotion in the child</b>	Fear and guilt	Security

Two key biblical concepts

1. Actions: Consistent consequences

*He who withholds his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently.*

Proverbs 13:24 (NASB)

*Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far away.*

Proverbs 22:15 (NIV)

Seven steps to discipline:

- 1) Clear **WARNING**.
- 2) Establish responsibility.
- 3) Avoid **EMBARASSMENT**.
- 4) Communicate grief.
- 5) Flick the **WRIST**.
- 6) Sincere repentance.
- 7) Unconditional **LOVE**.

2. **Words:** Clear instructions

*<sup>11</sup>My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline, and do not resent His rebuke,  
<sup>12</sup>because the LORD disciplines those He loves, as a father the son he delights in.*  
Proverbs 3:11-12 (NIV)

**Four ways to use words to bring about correction:**

- 1) Say "no" **FIRMLY**.
- 2) **CLEAR WARNING** of consequences.
- 3) Use **CONTRACTS**.
- 4) Use **CONSEQUENCES**.

**More practical tips for balanced parenting:**

**Avoid the pitfalls of:**

- The screaming parent
- The all talk parent
- The abusive parent
- The "close-lipped" parent
- The light bulb parent



**Develop a game plan:**

- Identify the top 2 behavior problems.
- Honestly evaluate your parenting pattern.
- Have a family conference.
- Set goals together.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. How would you classify your parenting style or tendency compared to the case study? Discuss your answer.
2. What is the difference between **discipline** and **punishment**?
3. What are your top two disciplinary problems with your children? What means of action/consequences or instruction would help your child learn obedience?
4. What **specific step** do you need to take to align your parenting with God's pattern to bring out the best in your child?