

BIBLICAL PARENTS AND PARENTING

By Pastor Steve Martin

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BIBLICAL PARENTING BEGINS WITH BIBLICAL PARENTS--THE MAN

(What the Bible teaches about biblical manhood and fathers and why it matters to parenting.)

I. GOD CREATED MAN TO FULFILL A CERTAIN CALLING IN LIFE

A. BIBLICAL MANHOOD--MAN'S HIGH CALLING AS GOD MADE HIM (Genesis 1-2)

1. Man is a creature, created by God in His image. (Man is not self-existent) (Genesis 1:26-27)
2. Man is called by God to be vice-regent, accountable to God in exercising dominion over the planet. Man does not own the earth but is to be a steward of it. (Genesis 1:28-30)
3. Man is created and called by God to labor at the work God gives him to do (Genesis 2:15)
4. Man is under the authority of God as his Creator, King and Law-giver (Genesis 2:16-17)
5. Man is to recognize that he is not complete without the appropriate woman (Genesis 2:18-20)
6. Man is called to be the head over his wife, God's ordained helper in accomplishing the goals for which God created them and their marriage (Genesis 2:18-22)

B. BIBLICAL MANHOOD--A CHRISTIAN HUSBAND LOVES HIS HIGH CALLING-- BY LOVING HIS WIFE SACRIFICIALLY (Ephesians 5:25-27)

1. Christian husbands are to love their wives sacrificially as Christ loved His Bride, the Church
2. Ephesians 5:25--Is there any higher or harder Job Description in the world?
3. Review with me for a moment how Christ loved His Bride and gave Himself for her
 - a. He gave up His rights for her--Philippians 2:5-11
 - b. He gave up His comfort and ease for her--Matthew 8:20
 - c. He gave up His personal agenda for her--Matthew 26:39, 42
 - d. He gave up this world's fame and fortune for her--Matthew 4:8-10
 - e. He gave up His life for her--Philippians 2:8
4. The means through which the Christians husband expresses his sacrificial love to his bride
 - a. By dying to self (implied in Ephesians 5:25-27)
 - b. By washing his wife with the Word of God (Ephesians 5:26)
 - c. Through prayer--presenting her to the Father in intercession (Ephesians 5:27)
5. What are the goals of a husband's sacrificial love for his wife?
 - a. To see her in heaven (Ephesians 5:26-27) (cf. Revelation 21:1-3)
 - b. To see her become a holy woman, what she was called to be (Ephesians 5:26-27)

C. BIBLICAL MANHOOD--A CHRISTIAN HUSBAND LOVES HIS HIGH CALLING-- BY LOVING HIS WIFE PRACTICALLY (Ephesians 5:28-30)

1. God gives an example of how to love your wife practically--take care of her like you already take care of your own body (v.28)
2. How do you already take care of your own body? (Feeding it, making sure its needs are met)
 - a. v. 29--**"For no one ever hated his own flesh but nourishes and cherishes it"**
 - b. What is it to "nourish" a body? (Providing food, clothing and shelter and reasonable safety)
 - c. What is it to "cherish" a body? (Implies meeting other needs our attentiveness reveals to us)
 - d. 1st Peter 3:7--Christian husbands are to live with their wives in an "understanding way"
 - e. Attentive husbands love and build up; they never want to be "harsh with them" (Col. 3:19)
3. Biblical husbands recognize there is a mysterious connection between the relationship of Christ and His Bride, the Church & a Christian husband and his bride, his wife! (Eph. 5:31-33)

D. BIBLICAL MANHOOD--A CHRISTIAN HUSBAND LEADS IN HIS HIGH CALLING (Ephesians 5:22-33)

1. Christian husbands are ordained by God to be the head of their wife, their children & their home

- a. God's Word teaches that the husband is the "head" of the wife (5:23)
 - b. Headship of the husband was ordained by God in creation's hierarchy (Genesis 2:20-23)
 - c. The husband is the head of the home and principal leader of the children too (Eph. 6:4)
 - d. God's church is structured so wives do not have authority over husbands (1st Tim. 2:11-14)
 - e. REMEMBER ADAM & EVE--the terrible consequences of a man's dereliction of duty to God and his wife (and posterity) AND a woman's independence and rebellion against her God.
2. Christian husbands lead as the mark of their headship
 - a. God's example--the head of the body leads and directs the body (5:22-24)
 - b. Headship leadership means oversight has been delegated by God and man is to take the initiative and responsibility and later give an account to God for his stewardship.
 3. Christian husbands must give an account to God for their headship leadership (of their wife, their children, their home and their work) [cf. Hebrews 13:17; 2nd Corinthians 5:10]
 4. Common problems regarding a husband's headship/leadership
 - a. Headship exercises authority but is not "authoritarian"
 - b. Headship is not omni-competent (it can ask for help; it can delegate but doesn't "dump")
 - c. Headship is not a democracy, determined by counting heads
 - d. Headship communicates (It explains itself and can be asked questions)
 - e. Headship knows that sometimes it will be unloved and unappreciated--but is faithful anyway!
 - f. Headship calls rebellious, unrepentant family members to account before God (and if necessary before the Church and its duly constituted leadership, the Elders.)

E. WHY IS BIBLICAL MANHOOD CRITICAL FOR BIBLICAL PARENTING?

1. Passive Christian husbands who do not lead their wives and children (and in parallel unsubmitive wives) model rebellion to their children each and every day.
 - a. Both husband and wife are modeling that they will not submit to God's appointed roles.
 - b. Such parents always produce rebels as children (Why? Because they each model rebellion 24-7 at home, regardless of their church attendance and public profession.)
 - c. Children cannot get over the double-talk, confusion of father and mother modeling the opposite of what they profess. (God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble!)
 - d. Passive, compliant Adam and rebellious, independent Eve had an ungodly rebel of a son who murdered their godly son--after they had already plunged the planet into ruin!
2. The Word of God and empirical evidence show the overwhelming importance of a faithful father to the life and well-being of his children.
 - a. Passive, compliant fathers create passive, compliant sons who look for a strong woman to tell them what to do and they create daughters who are looking for a weak man to control.
 - b. Unloving, harsh fathers spoil their image of manhood to their sons and their daughters. (True biblical manhood is so distorted as to make it unattractive or even repulsive.)
 - c. Fathers who are unfaithful to oversee and be involved in the development of their children impair their children's personal growth and harm their future lives. (e.g. Dr. Meg Meeker)
 - d. Studies show that children think that God is like their own father, only greater. How sad that a father who is not faithful (nor repents when he sins) greatly distorts what the Father is like.
 - e. God the Father is not like any human father. Rather humans fathers are to be like God. The only basis we have for judging whether a father is good or bad is our Heavenly Father, not vice versa. You couldn't say whether your earthly father was good or bad without a Heavenly Father as the standard. A Word to Disappointed children--Even if your earthly father was far from perfect, you can only know that because you compare him against a standard he did not meet--and that standard is your perfect, loving Father in heaven!

CHECKLIST FOR CHRISTIAN HUSBANDS

I. HOW AM I DOING AS A SACRIFICIAL LOVER?

1. How am I doing at giving up my rights, pleasures and comforts to love my wife?
2. When was the last time I set aside my agenda to make her successful or please her?
3. What concrete ways have I died to myself in loving my wife?
4. Am I regularly "washing her with the Word of God" ? How do I apply God's Word to life?
5. Do I regularly present her before the throne of grace in prayer?
6. Is my clear goal to present her as a holy woman of God to Christ on Judgment Day?

II. HOW AM I DOING AS A PRACTICAL LOVER?

1. Am I providing for my wife's and my family's financial needs?
2. Is our home safe and secure? Do repairs need to be made? Do I do attend to them quickly?
3. Am I better at pointing out my wife's weaknesses and attacking her than I am at pointing out her strengths and positive traits and praising her? Do I even know my wife's strengths?
4. Do I consciously remember that my wife is "weaker" than I am physically and thus am not critical nor ridiculing of her when she cannot keep up with me or needs more sleep?
5. How much do I know about a woman's body and physical problems?
6. Is my "lovemaking" sensitive and giving--or selfish, quick and "gimme-gimme"?
7. When was the last time I fixed something around the house without being asked?
8. Count up how many hours you give to your job(including commuting time & "think time") and how many hours you give to your God, your covenanted wife and your children.
9. Do you talk with your wife? Do you really listen to what she says? Is only what you do important? Is only what you are doing worth listening to and giving thought-time to?
10. Are you a student of your wife? Do you know her better than she knows herself ?

III. HOW AM I DOING AS THE "HEAD" OF MY HOME?

1. Do I consciously know that God Himself called me to this role of leader in my home?
2. Am I seeking my Heavenly Father's approval or my wife's approval? Or my in-law's?
3. Am I taking the initiative in spiritual things? In financial things? In relational things?
4. Do I take the lead in reading to, praying with, and disciplining the children?
5. Do we have a "Family Altar", that is, a regular time of prayer and Bible reading? If not, how soon can we begin?
6. Do I view my authority to lead in my home as a result of my popularity or my call by God?
7. If I was called home to heaven tonight, would my regular practice and concrete plans for leading my family bring me the Father's praise or rebuke?
8. What changes must take place in my leadership style to enable me to be a good leader and head of my home? To develop "convictions"? To develop loving relationships?
9. Is my wife generally submissive or a rebel? Have I told her that? How does she treat me?
10. Do I allow my wife/children to talk to me/about me, or the pastor, teachers or coaches or other God-ordained authorities in a way that dishonors authority & poisons the hearers?
11. Do I explain my decisions well? Do I invite discussion? Do I pray with them about this?
12. Have I earnestly sought God through His Word and prayer to develop convictions? What are my convictions? What are my goals in life? Can I list them for myself and others?

BIBLICAL PARENTING BEGINS WITH BIBLICAL PARENTS--THE WOMAN

(What the Bible teaches about biblical womanhood, wives and mothering)

I. THE CHRISTIAN WIFE SUBMITS TO HER HIGH CALLING

A. THE CHRISTIAN WIFE HAS A HIGH CALLING (Genesis 1-2)

1. She is a creature, created in the image of God (1:26-27)
2. She is a creature called to be God's vice-regent in exercising dominion over the earth (1:28)
3. She is a creature under the authority of her husband (2:20-23)
4. She is a creature who is to be a "help-meet" to her husband (2:20)

B. THE CHRISTIAN WIFE'S SUBMISSION TO HER HIGH CALLING (Ephesians 5:22-33)

1. Five times the Word of God commands wives to be submissive to their husbands
 - a. **Ephesians 5:22 and 24**
 - b. **Colossians 3:18**
 - c. **Titus 2:5**
 - d. **1st Peter 3:1 (and illustrated in 3:5)**
2. The specific meaning of "submit to" and "be subject to" is from a military word meaning "to subordinate oneself," "to place oneself under rank of another" or "to place oneself in subjection to another."
3. Submission to a higher authority is the common biblical teaching for us all
 - a. **Luke 2:51**--the young Jesus was in submission to His earthly parents
 - b. **John 12:49**--grown up Jesus said that He did not speak or act on His own authority but that which was delegated to Him by His heavenly Father.
 - c. **Romans 13:1**--all authority is delegated and every person is to be in submission to the governing authorities that exist.
 - d. **Titus 2:9**--servants are to be subject to their masters
 - e. **Hebrews 12:9**--children are to be in submission to their parents
 - f. Every person is under authority to someone. It is the essence of sinful autonomy to want to be a law unto oneself.
4. A Christian wife wants to submit to her husband because...
 - a. she wants to please God (Obedience always pleases God.)
 - b. she wants to bring honor to her Savior (by modeling His submission to the Father)
 - c. she instinctively knows it is the right thing to do (it corresponds to why she was created)
 - d. she wants to be a living example to her children (Meditate on **Luke 6:40** and parenting)
 - e. she wants to see her husband become holy, the man God created him to be (**Prov. 12:4**)
 - f. she wants to be Christ-like in the beauty of holiness (**1st Peter 3:3-5**)
5. How a Christian wife submits to her husband
 - a. "...as to the Lord" (**Ephesians 5:22**)
 - b. "As the church submits to Christ, so should the wife...in everything" (**Ephesians 5:24**)
[NOTE: "Everything" means within the boundaries of God's righteous law.]
6. The legacy left behind by a wife and mother who is unsubmitive ?
 - a. Alienation from her husband (**Proverbs 27:15-16**)
 - b. Rebellious children who learn rebellion against authority by watching her! (**Proverbs 14:1**)
 - c. A life lived under the chastening hand of God (if you are a real Christian (**Hebrews 12:6-8**))

II. THE CHRISTIAN WIFE'S RESPECT FOR HER HIGH CALLING

A. WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD TEACH ABOUT RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY?

1. God has ordained all authority that exists--all authority! (**Rom.13:5; Titus 3:1-2, 1st Pet. 2:13-17**)
2. Rebellion against God-ordained authority is rebellion against God Himself
3. Obedience with a good and right attitude is always the way to God's blessing!
4. The God-approved attitude toward authority is respect, fear, honor and love.
5. Believers are never to speak slanderously against an authority (for all are installed by God)
6. Respect for authority involves eagerness to do good, to obey with a good attitude and not sullenly and dragging one's feet!

B. HOW IS A WIFE TO APPLY GOD'S COMMAND TO RESPECT HER HUSBAND AND HIS GOD-DELEGATED AUTHORITY?

1. A Christian wife is to view her husband as God's immediate, specific authority. Paraphrasing another biblical text: "How can you say you are submitting to the God you cannot see when you won't submit to His delegated authority that you can see?"
2. A Christian wife shows respect by honoring and esteeming her husband as God's appointed instrument of blessing for her and their family.
3. A Christian wife loves her husband as an expression of respecting her husband as God's good gift (and this respect can be best demonstrated/modeled by her loving her husband--Titus 2:4)
4. A Christian wife knows that respecting her husband means praying for her husband and the critical position he is entrusted with. (1st Timothy 2:1-3)
5. A Christian wife is very careful with her tongue and how she speaks to and about her husband (The tongue is the overflow valve of the heart and respectful speech is very important as a prime part of showing respect--cf. 1st Peter 3:6)

C. EIGHT SINFUL ATTITUDES THAT UNDERMINE RESPECT FOR YOUR HUSBAND AND HIS DELEGATED AUTHORITY (and which must be put to death!)

1. **Pride**--the wife who is not humble and submissive at heart (cf. Gen. 3:6). She is always eager to argue, refuse, ask "Why?" a million times and otherwise make it known her heart is not in it.
2. **Fear**--the wife who is afraid because she knows her husband's weaknesses (1st Peter 3:6) Knowing the perfect love of God casts out fear. God is greater than you or your husband and He is the ultimate source of security and stability and the meeting of all your needs.
3. **Unbiblical Perfectionism**--holding on to a false ideal by thinking "If only I had a perfect husband THEN I would be respectful, submissive and happy!" (This is a fallen world; nothing and no one is not deeply flawed by the Fall of our first parents. There are no perfect people.)
4. **Idealistic Romanticism**--the "Phantom Husband" is the mirage of Christian romance novels and Hallmark movies and watching ANN OF GREEN GABLES too many times!
5. **The Myth of Entitlement**--"I deserve better--much, much better!" (cf. Genesis 3:5-6 where Eve was tempted to believe she deserved better and that God was keeping it from her!)
6. **Idolatry**--expecting your husband, a mere creature like yourself, to be for you what only God, the Creator, can be for you--all sufficient. (1st Peter 3:5 and STEPPING HEAVENWARD)
7. **Walking by sight and not by faith** (seeing only problems and errors and not the God who stands behind your husband and able and willing to help you both! Almighty God and His promises and character must be factored into everything that our live involves!)
8. **Unbelief**--a woman who does not believe God's Word and trust His promises will not respect and submit to her husband. The problem--not her husband's failings but her own unbelief.
 - a. God is more than adequate for every situation and every trial and every imperfect, weak, and sinful husband--but He is NOT that to the wife who does not believe Him.
 - b. When you don't believe and trust God, then you won't respect and submit to God's delegated, on-site authority figure, your husband, either.

CHECKLIST FOR CHRISTIAN WIVES

I. HOW AM I DOING IN SUBMITTING TO AUTHORITY IN GENERAL?

1. Do I understand and agree with God's establishment of authority?
2. Do I see rebellion against authority as sin against God?
3. Do I see (and treat) my authorities as God's servants to me for good?
4. Do I speak slanderously against authority in general? Against authorities in particular?
5. How much of the time do I fear authority and thus show my inward rebellion towards it?

II. HOW AM I DOING AT PUTTING TO DEATH ATTITUDES THAT UNDERMINE MY RESPECT FOR MY HUSBAND AS MY GOD-GIVEN AUTHORITY?

1. Am I a humble and submissive wife that is too abased to look down on others, or am I a proud woman who frequently looks down upon others, especially my husband, who I criticize? How often am I self-righteous in my attitudes towards my husband and others?
2. Am I an unbiblical perfectionist who expects from my husband and others those things that only heaven will bring in true perfection?
3. Am I a romantic idealist who has a "phantom" in her heart which no real man could ever compete with in reality?
4. Do I arrogantly think of myself as "entitled" to better than what I receive? What does God really "owe" me, besides hell? Am I a discontented person?
5. What things am I demanding of my husband (or secretly criticizing him for) that are really only to be found in God Himself? Am I an idolatrous woman who looks to a creature for happiness, satisfaction and security only to be found in the Creator?
6. How much of my anguish with my husband is really the result of my own lack of trust in God and His resources and His adequacy?

III. HOW AM I DOING AT BECOMING A SUBMISSIVE WIFE?

1. Is my regular and conscious attitude one of being in submission to my husband?
2. Do I submit out of a desire to see my God and Savior honored in my life and marriage?
3. Do I see my the flaring up of rebellion as dishonoring to my Savior?
4. How much of the time do I see my husband as God's divinely chosen instrument to make me more Christ-like, which is His eternal goal for me?
5. Do I really believe that God always blesses obedience?
6. How frequently do I really concern myself with seeing my husband conformed to the image of Christ and obedient to His Word? Does it motivate me to be a submissive wife?
7. If I disagree with my husband's final decision, I do not give in to murmuring/complaining or gossiping to others. True or false? (How much of the time do I talk back to him?)
8. I do not criticize my husband or complain about him to the children nor do I in any way undermine his respect with them. True or false?
9. How often do I tell my husband that I love and respect him and pray for him with thanksgiving to God? If I would do that today, would he be surprised or shocked?
10. Do I speak to my husband irreverently? If so, how much? Do I see it for the sin that it is?
11. How great of a tragedy do I view Eve's rebellion against her husband, Adam, and God?
12. Am I raising future rebels who are modeling themselves after me even now?

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL PARENTING OF CHILDREN

(Parenting with a biblical mind-set, with biblical love, biblical limits and biblical discipline)

I. PARENTING WITH A BIBLICAL MIND

A. STEWARDSHIP, NOT OWNERSHIP, OF YOUR CHILDREN

1. Christian parents are to see themselves as stewards of their children, not their owners.
 - a. A steward is someone who is entrusted with valuable and is accountable to the true owner when the day of reckoning comes.
 - b. God has entrusted our children to us for a season but they are His creation.
2. Psalm 127 says that children are a gift of the Lord and they are entrusted to adults, usually their parents, to be raised to maturity.

B. TRAINING WITH ETERNITY and TIME IN VIEW (AND NOT JUST TIME)

1. We train our children to be effective adults in God's world, training body, soul and mind for a life of service to God and man (**Luke 2:52**)
2. It is biblical thinking to value eternity over time--**1st Timothy 4:7b-8**--A mature person makes decisions and choices based upon the long haul and eternal consequences. The immature person or child makes decisions and choices based upon short-term or immediate fulfillment (with little or no thought of the long term consequences.)
3. Christian parents know their children have a physical body and will not neglect training their children with habits of physical well-being. Unhealthy people are limited in their service to God.
4. Christian parents know their children have a mind and want to see it trained and renewed according to the truth. Ignorance is not bliss! Children with warped/incorrect thinking will have a trouble-filled adulthood. We want our children's minds to be renewed in truth (**Rom. 12:1-2**)
5. Christian parents first priority is to see to it that their children are raised in the fear and instruction of the Lord. A child who is prepared to live on this planet only is not prepared to live for eternity. Parents have not completed their jobs with only physical fitness and a great mental education. Children must be trained in the gospel and as Charles Spurgeon called it: "the science of Jesus Christ and Him crucified."
6. Parents who raised their children to be great students and great athletes ONLY are fools. If I as a parents do not educate my child how to flee from the wrath to come, no matter what else I have done for that child, I have failed that child. They are unprepared for life and death!
7. What will it profit a child if he/she gains the whole world but loses his/her immortal soul?

II. PARENTING WITH BIBLICAL LOVE

A. BIBLICAL LOVE IS BASED ON THE CHARACTER OF GOD & THE LAW OF GOD

1. God who is "holy, holy, holy" has eternally been a loving God--the Father loving the Son, the Son loving His Father; the Spirit loving the Father & the Son, etc. God is love (**1st John 4:7-11**)
2. Love is not primarily a feeling but a disposition, a purpose of will (remember Jesus' teaching about the Good Samaritan--**Luke 10:25-37**).
3. God's love does not rejoice in "unrighteousness" but rejoices in the truth (**1st Cor. 13:6**). The underlying Greek word means "wrong-doing" or "breaking God's laws".
4. It is not "loving" to do something which breaks or violates God's law and then claim it was done out of Christian love. The Law of God is love's eyes--it shows it what to do. Love is the Law's power source, empowering us to obey and conform to God's Law.
5. The greatest single instructor of children is their parents! Dr. Ted Ward, **VALUES BEGIN AT HOME**; Victor Press --"What is most determinative for the values your children will adopt is not

where you send them to school but whether you, the parents, practice what the Bible teaches and your church preaches.” Parents modeling biblical truths is a most powerful way of instruction!

B. HOW BIBLICAL LOVE IS EXPRESSED

1. By personal self-sacrifice for the one loved (**John 3:16 and 4:9-11 and Romans 8:32**)
2. By persistent verbal expressions of tender affection (**Zech. 3:17; Ephesians 4:15**)
3. By meeting the physical needs of our children (**1st Tim. 5:8**)--e.g. Howard Hendricks’ son!
4. By living with your children in an faithful, dependable way--(**Proverbs 20:6-7**)
5. By constant acts of love and kindness (**1st Corinthians 13:1-7; Proverbs 3:27**)
6. By persistent teaching and instruction in life and godliness (**Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Eph. 6:4**)
7. By patient and persistent encouragement and exhortation (**Eph. 4:15; 1st Thess. 2:11-12**)
8. By consistent and persevering discipline of disobedient, rebellious behavior--(**Heb. 12:5-11**)
9. By appropriate physical expressions of love & tenderness--holding, kissing, hugging, “noogie”
10. NOTE: Biblical love is NOT the blind, naïve sentimentalism of the “enabler”--(**1st Cor.13:6**)

III. PARENTING WITH BIBLICAL LIMITS & BIBLICAL DISCIPLINE

A. BIBLICAL AUTHORITY--THE RIGHT TO USE FORCE TO COMPEL OBEDIENCE

1. God set and explained His ways in the Garden of Eden & enforced these limits with discipline (so **Genesis 1-3** shows the communication of the limits and the enforcement of the discipline)
2. Parents authority over their children is delegated to them by God Himself
 - a. the 5th commandment (**Exodus 20:12**) is the foundation of all earthly authority
 - b. apostolic command reinforces O. T. foundational teaching--**Ephesians 6:1; Col. 3:20**
3. God’s Word (and principles taken from it) are the foundation of the principles which parents are to teach their children. “Rules of our Home” are extrapolations of biblical law and love.
4. Parents are to be very clear and consistent as to the rules of the family and their enforcement.
 - a. Unwritten or constantly changing rules make for a confused and at times chaotic household.
 - b. Rules of conduct that are not faithfully enforced are not truly expected to be obeyed!
 - c. Children are to be disciplined for disobedience and rebellion, not ignorance or confusion

B. BIBLICAL PARENTS ARE TO FAITHFULLY EXERCISE AUTHORITY TO COMPEL OBEDIENCE

1. When God first makes a covenant with Abraham, He calls him to exercise authority over his children and household--“that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice...” (**Genesis 18:19**)
2. Parental discipline is a critical part of raising our children in the Lord. To fail to discipline your children is likened to hate in the Bible. To fail to discipline your children is to set them on a path of hardship, confusion, misery (**Proverbs 3:11-12; 13:24; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; 29:15, 17, 19**)
3. Passive-aggressive behavior is used sparingly by God as a form of discipline to His children SO we should use it sparingly with our children (**Proverbs 27:5**)
4. Other forms of discipline are restitution for things taken or broken, isolation from the rest of the family for a short time (quarantine), removal of privileges previously enjoyed, kept from the Lord’s Table (if they are a communicant church member), removal from involvement in special family times enjoyed by obedient children, missing of a meal, etc.
5. All discipline hurts in some way and any so-called discipline that does not hurt in some way is not effective. Children should learn that sin has painful consequences. **“For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”**--Hebrews 12:11

BIBLICAL PARENTING OF YOUNG ADULTS (a.k.a. “Teenagers”)

(and a word about parenting Adult Children)

I. YOUNG ADULTS (a.k.a “teenagers”) NEED ON-GOING LOVE AND INSTRUCTION

A. YOUNG ADULTS NEED ON-GOING LOVE (& attentive involvement in their lives)

1. Some parents wrongly see their teens as maturing to the point that they do not need to give love and training. That would be very, very wrong!
 - a. Some of their most important decisions in life are coming up (Master, Mission, Mate)
 - b. Making life-impact decisions without proper training is very harmful (“marry in haste, repent at leisure” is not a modern proverb for nothing!)
 - c. People who know your teen best (Dad & Mom) need to help with input about mission/career (“You know, you are really good at this--I can see you doing this”), marriage (“You know, his father has been married four times and then left his last wife--does your young man really know what biblical commitment is all about?”); and Master (“I love you so much, honey, and I don’t want to see you ruin your life by going it alone and ruining your eternity--you need the Lord like your Mom and I needed the Lord. We wouldn’t have made it without Him.”)
2. The Lord Jesus intensified His relationship with & training of His men the last months of His life
 - a. Like a father with his family, the Lord lived with His men and trained them by example (24/7) and verbal instruction (on so many teachable moments--“Are you also going to leave?”).
 - b. It is wrong to let your young adult just slide out the door because you eased up at the end.
 - c. I am not talking about “tightening the leash”, I am talking about intensifying your relationship
 - d. Young adults do not want to be over-controlled (Who does?) but they do want intimacy.
3. Young adults need frequent expressions (verbal and non-verbal) of affection and love
 - a. They are becoming adults but they frequently lack self-confidence and self-assurance
 - b. What parents say to them has a big impact upon who they are and what they think about themselves. Saying exaggerated things (“Now you have ruined your life!?”) does not help!!
 - c. Parents need to look for each and every particle of good choices (and why it was a good choice) and applaud them as to why they were good choices. That’s how they learn!
 - d. Christ’s Apostle said that he modeled his apostolic activity upon good fathers--“*For you know how like a father with his children, we exhorted each of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own Kingdom and glory.*” (1st Thessalonians 2:11-12 and see below for 1st Thessalonians 2:7-8))
 - e. Paul also said that he modeled in his discipleship a mother of young children who need patient gentleness--“*But we gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God, but our own selves, because you had become very dear to us.*”
4. Love, affirmation, patient teaching and prayer should outweigh criticism and confrontation.
 - a. You should express your love physically in hugs and kisses (or other young adults or worse, older adults, will offer their illicit expressions of love to your young adult!)
 - b. Instead of camping on your child’s weaknesses and constantly criticizing, look for the obvious (or not so obvious) expressions of good character and judgment and praise them.
 - c. You should be your child’s biggest cheerleader! (e.g. Remember the “circle of love”)

B. YOUNG ADULTS NEED INTENSE TRAINING WITH DEBRIEFING & DISCUSSION

1. On-going training involves teaching, explaining and role playing how to deal with life situations
 - a. Teach your young men how to deal with aggressive girls; and vice versa for daughters
 - b. Teach how to conduct themselves when tempted by drugs, drink, sex, breaking the law, etc.
 - c. Young adults are often in high risk situations and so they need to be thoroughly trained how

to respond. Adults in high risk situations train, train, train so right response is programmed.

d. Young adults should be expected to ask questions about “how to’s” & we should give answers. Rebellion which is expressed in insubordinate “why?” questions is another matter.

2. Training of young adults involves more thoughtful discussions than with younger children.
 - a. Our Lord taught His Apostles most of the night before He was betrayed--John 13-14-15-16
 - b. Our Lord prayed with His men intensely the night before He was betrayed--John 17
 - c. Everything need not be a “big discussion” because wise parents will plan and choose when to take advantage of the “teachable moment” or create their own “teachable moment”.
3. Wise parents will give their young adults assignments that may mean failure (on a non-life harming issue) but which can become spring boards for self-understanding and growth.
 - a. Our Lord sent His disciples on simple missions without Him and then debriefed afterward.
 - b. Our Lord let 9 disciples fail while He was on the Mount of Transfiguration with 3
 - c. Our Lord returned and saved the day so that the weakness and failure of the 9 did not harm others. (Matthew 17:1-21)

II. YOUNG ADULTS STILL NEED DISCIPLINE AND CORRECTION

A. YOUNG ADULTS MUST LEARN TO FAITHFULLY LIVE UNDER AUTHORITY...OR ELSE SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES!

1. As they mature, young adults may be tempted to think they don’t need parental authority
 - a. They wrongly think their parents want them to be under their thumb their whole lives!
 - b. Biblical parents want their children to grow up to be “independently dependent on Christ” !
 - c. E.g. Remember the umbilical cord
2. Young adults who have not learned to submit to authority with a good attitude while still at home can expect a life of failed marriages, being fired from work, being in jail...or worse!
 - a. Employees are under the authority of their employers; Wives are under the authority of their husbands; Citizens are under the authority of the government & its agents--policemen, etc.
3. Parental authority as expressed to young adults is different than what is expressed to children
 - a. Black & white directions (“Don’t cross the street”) and corporal punishment have given way to persuasion & penalties. We want them to learn to think in line with God and His Word.
 - b. 2nd Timothy 3:16-17--“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”
 - [1] “Teaching” means general instruction--what to do and how to do it
 - [2] “rebuke” means showing where they are wrong, where they don’t meet the standard
 - [3] “correction” means showing them how to do it right--helping them “get it”
 - [4] “training in righteousness” means showing how this pleases God and what it means to a life that is pleasing to God.

B. PARENTAL AUTHORITY STILL HAS CLOUT BUT IS NOT PHYSICAL

1. Again, chastening is for disobedience and rebellion, not ignorance, confusion or immaturity
 - a. James 4:17--“So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.”
 - b. Disobedience, rebellious attitude & speech are to be disciplined--no one gets a pass to sin!
2. Strong exercise of authority (“Because I am your parent and said so!”) is reserved for open defiance and rebellion when listening and persuasion are trampled upon by the young adult.
3. Loss of privileges (car, phone, computer, going out with friends) but not loss of communication should follow. On-going conversations should follow in the days ahead. Consequences remain.

GOD'S STRONG RESOURCES FOR BIBLICAL MARRIAGE & PARENTING

(How in the world can I be such a parent or do these things?)

I. A RATIONAL PARENT, SEEING THEIR GREAT RESPONSIBILITIES, CRIES OUT: "LORD, WHO IS SUFFICIENT FOR THESE THINGS?"

A. DO YOU FEEL THE GREAT WEIGHT OF RESPONSIBILITY OF YOUR HIGH CALLING AND THUS SENSE YOUR OWN INADEQUACY ?

1. Christ's Apostle, Paul, had the responsibility for all his missionary churches and their members
 - a. Paul was a mother and a father to his churches--1st Thessalonians 2:7-12
 - b. Paul was the "proud parent" looking ahead to glory with his churches--1st Thess. 2:19-20
2. You could say that Paul had a very large spiritual family to care for
 - a. His spiritual family included many "spiritual children" (the young churches at Galatia, Crete, Ephesus, Colossae, Philippi, Thessalonica, etc.)
 - b. His spiritual family included children that greatly grieved him (e.g. the Galatians)
 - c. His spiritual family included children that were high maintenance and difficult (Corinth)
 - d. Parenting people's souls is hard, taxing, soul-draining work--2nd Corinthians 11:23-30

B. PAUL HAD TO INCREASINGLY FACE UP TO HIS FELT SENSE OF INADEQUACY

1. In 2nd Corinthians 2:16, Paul bares his soul to the "problem child" Corinthians and cries out:
"Who is sufficient for these things?"
2. As Paul reasons with the Corinthians about where the resources for adequacy come from to fulfill a seemingly impossible task, he tells them six verses later in 2nd Corinthians 3:5--"Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God." [So he told the Philippians while he was in prison: "I can do all things (lawful things that God requires of me) through Christ who strengthens me."]
3. There it is in a nutshell. Just as it was beyond us to save ourselves and God's supernatural work was absolutely necessary, so believers need the powerful resources of Almighty God to live out the details of a holy life--whether marriage, family, work or citizenship.
4. Have you learned this lesson? Your adequacy or sufficiency to complete your God-appointed work as a believer comes from God, through Christ, by the Holy Spirit.

II. GOD'S STRONG RESOURCES FOR BIBLICAL PARENTING (The Means of Grace)

A. GOD THE SON GAVE GOD THE SPIRIT TO YOU AS HIS DIVINE "STAND-IN"

1. The context of the marriage doctrine of Ephesians 5:22-33 is being "filled with the Spirit" of 5:18 !
 - a. Paul is teaching believers that we cannot do these things in the power of the flesh but need supernatural resources to live them out.
 - b. Are you self-consciously relying upon God the Holy Spirit's enablement?
 - c. Do you self-consciously look to Him moment by moment to enable you to obey God's Word?
2. 2nd Timothy 1:7--"God has not given you a spirit of fear but one of love, power and self-control"--just what you need to be a biblical parent.
 - a. God has not left you helpless & hopeless, bereft of the necessary ability to do the job at hand
 - b. Luke 11:9-13--"Ask and it shall be given to you...if you hard-hearted and sinful men know how to give good gifts to your children, HOW MUCH MORE will the Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"
 - c. Are you regularly seeking to have the Holy Spirit's empowerment to display the fruit of the Spirit in your life (Galatians 5:22-23)?

B. GOD GAVE HIS INSPIRED WORD FOR THE WISDOM YOU NEED TO FUNCTION

1. Examine Colossians 3:16 (and context) and compare it with Ephesians 5:18 (and context).
 - a. In Colossians, Paul is teaching that letting the Word of Christ richly dwell in you is absolutely necessary to display the right attitudes and actions of a Christian in marriage, child-rearing and in the workplace.
 - b. In Ephesians, Paul is teaching that being filled with the Spirit is absolutely necessary to display the right attitudes and actions of a Christian in marriage, child-rearing and in the workplace.
 - c. Two things which are equal to the same thing are equal to each other. Being filled with God the Holy Spirit is the flip side of letting the Word of Christ richly dwell within you.
2. We need the eternal wisdom of God to live out our lives in ways which please our Savior.
 - a. To rely upon our own wisdom is folly and leads to many a harm
 - b. Prayerfully meditating upon God's Word gives us the wisdom we need to parent our children
 - c. Bathing our minds (husband and wife) in the Word of God renews our minds and makes them more in tune with God's holy wisdom. (Cf. John 17:17; Romans 12:2)

C. GOD GAVE US UNLIMITED ACCESS TO HIMSELF THROUGH PRAYER

1. Most of the prayers in the Bible are either praise ("God, you are so great and wonderful !") or petition ("Almighty God, I need your help!")
 - a. James 1:5 ("If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.") is given in the context of not knowing what to do in regards to a trial or problem.
 - b. Raising children means years of wondering what to do in regards to the latest turn of events.
 - c. Prayer is a sweet means of grace always at our disposal, even in the middle of a conversation!
2. The Bible often reasons from the greater to the lesser so that we might think biblically about God
 - a. E.g. Romans 8:32--"He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will not also with Him freely give us all things?"
 - b. E.g. Proverbs 21:1--"The king's heart is a channel of water in the hand of the Lord; He turns it wherever He wills."
 - c. "Lord God, You gave this child to us as a gift of your grace (Psalm 127). We now ask for your help in raising this child in the fear and instruction of the Lord. Help us to be faithful and do it right. We need your wisdom daily. We need to display the fruit of the Spirit daily. Help us for Christ's sake and the testimony to our children. Amen."

D. GOD GAVE US THE LOCAL CHURCH AS THE PLACE TO GROW FAMILIES

1. The New Testament knows nothing of "solitary Christianity". Every New Testament Christian was a member of a local church and under the ministry and authority of a local church.
 - a. Biblical parents know how much they need the local church as the context for growth.
 - b. We gather to worship God and grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ and His finished work
2. Wise Christians discipline themselves to be under the ministry of the Word & sacrament faithfully each Lord's Day. (They know that they need the "cavalry" of the gathered church for help.)
 - a. Faithful attendance means that you get what God has for you that Lord's Day from His Word.
 - b. God the Holy Spirit has not promised to live in the tapes & CD's we produce later.
 - c. Having the Lord's Supper explained and enacted each Lord's Day drives home the gospel and our need for regularly cleansing by the Work of Christ (1st John 1:7-9)
 - d. The preached Word washes our minds with truth and disciplines our actions by its corrections.
 - e. Each baptism re-enacts the death, burial and resurrection of the Christian with Christ.
3. With Paul faithful parents can say: "I am what I am by the grace of God and His grace to me was not in vain." (1st Corinthians 15:10). Looking on our lives, we come to see it is all of grace!

PERILS & AIMS IN BIBLICAL PARENTING

I. WRONG PRACTICES (PERILS) THAT ENDANGER BIBLICAL PARENTING

(Christian parents can discourage, frustrate & alienate their children through unbiblical actions/habits)

1. Misusing the Rod of Discipline

a. **Using the Rod of Discipline too little**--some parents lean this direction

(1) **Proverbs 13:24**--“He who s pares his rod hates his child.”

(2) Children need to be taught and learn that sin hurts--Sin ultimately does not make us happy but hurts us and others. Children may never learn this lesson if they never connect sin with painful consequences. Children need to learn that sin leads to judgment & punishment.

(3) **Proverbs 30:15**--“The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child who gets his own way (i.e. “**left to himself**”) brings shame to his mother.”

(4) Many adults have sinful habits because their parents were unwilling to confront and discipline such behavior at home. Such parents love themselves and hate their children!

b. **Using the Rod of Discipline to much**--other parents lean this direction

(1) Proverbs 17:10--“A rebuke goes deeper into a man of understanding than a hundred blows into a fool.” (The use of corporal punishment, the rod, is not the only means of discipline.)

(2) But foolish people often think that if a little is good, a lot is better. Hence in the apocryphal work, ECCLESIASTICUS 30:1, 12 it reads: “He who loves his son will whip him often...bow down his neck in his youth, and beat his sides while he is young.” (This is NOT biblical discipline but human cruelty under the guise of religious training.)

(3) William Boekenstein in TABLETALK--“*If your children can forget that you love them, either during or immediately following discipline, you might be doing it wrong.*”

c. **Being inconsistent in the use of discipline** (some parents are badly inconsistent in how they discipline their children and make discipline frustrating and confusing and thus ineffective)

(1) When you discipline one time for something and then don't discipline the next time for the very same thing, it is confusing to children. Consistency is a virtue.

(2) Or when you discipline harshly for something at one time but fail to discipline at all or deal lightly with it the next time, it is confusing & discouraging to children.

2. Failing to Speak and Act as “One Flesh”, United-in-Purpose Parents

a. Too often, father and mother are not on the same page and do not operate by the same rules when raising their children. Children thrive on consistency and parents who speak and act without unity are actually undermining their whole parenting!

b. One parent is too lenient; the other more demanding. Such confusing “double-speak” is very confusing and frustrating to children. “What do they want of me?” is their heart cry.

c. E.g. Testimony of one man who was a prisoner at the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary, having been on the FBI's 10 MOST WANTED LIST. After his conversion and subsequent change of life he was paroled by President Carter. In reflecting upon his troubled teen years he said that his father beat him for smoking and his mother gave him the money to buy his cigarettes!

d. Parents must regularly communicate with each other about the children and what is going on. (If one parent senses that things are out of balance or that Dad and Mom are not agreed and united, they should talk and pray about it soon. Children need unified parents!)

e. If the father and mother just cannot agree, then the wife must graciously follow her husband's leadership as head of the family (Colossians 3:18). [If the issue is sufficiently serious, they should seek the counsel of their Elders.]

f. William Boekenstein in TABLETALK--*“Near the end of Colossians 3, God speaks His will to people who play a role in six different relationships--wives, husbands, children, fathers, bondservants and masters. Only to fathers does God NOT give a positive command. He simply says: “Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged” (Colossians 3:21). Perhaps by doing this, God is accentuating the uniquely devastating problem of parents, especially fathers, who provoke their children. In Ephesians 6:4, God gives the clear alternative to parenting that provokes. “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and training of the Lord.”*

3. Maintaining a Disorderly Home

- a. God is the God of order and all things are to be done decently and in order (1st Corinthians 14:33)
- b. Created in His image and redeemed to reflect His character, believers are to live orderly lives. Confusion and chaos are not of God and must regularly be fought against and subdued.
- c. Structure in the home and in the family brings order and security to each family member.
- d. Parents who are themselves out of control bring chaos and confusion to the children. The children never know what to expect or what a day may bring from their parents.
- e. For example, homes that are perpetually messy, or worse, dirty, can help produce poorly adjusted children. (Living in filth and perpetual clutter is not biblical.)
- f. A home without order and structure actually discourages children and confuses their thinking.
- g. For example, a home without regularly scheduled meals with the family seated together around the table helps create disorder and discourages children.
- h. For example, a home without regularly scheduled and maintained bed times frustrates the God-given desire and need for order.
- i. A home with regular family devotions helps to establish order and set the whole family under the care of the sovereign King and Shepherd and brings stability and security.

4. Maintaining a Home Without Joy or Love (or where “love & joy” are very small)

- a. In some Christian homes, children are not treated with the dignity that God requires.
- b. Each human being is created in God’s image and deserves our love, respect and the other imperatives of the 2nd Table of God’s Law (Exodus 20) and 1st Corinthians 13.
- c. Christians should always speak to others with respect, whether parents to parents, parents to children or children to parents. (If you regularly speak to others with disrespect, expect your children to follow your example and so sin with their tongues also.)
- d. Some parents rarely or never congratulate or encourage their children. Instead they focus on their children’s faults, their short-comings (“Why did you get a 96 and not 100% on the test?” or “Why didn’t you score that goal?”). [Perfectionism is not a Christian value (q.v.).]
- e. Occasional reminders that we can each do better is not the same as the relentless message that we never measure up, never merit an “atta-boy”. After a while the message is so loud and clear that children give up and quit trying. “Why bother?”, they think, “you can never please him” (or her, or them).
- f. NOTE: A home that does not major on the grace of God in Christ and the persevering love of God for His people will instead major on one’s performance and law-keeping done to merit love. The result is hypocrisy and Pharisee-ism for the self-righteous, conforming child and angry rebellion for the “I don’t care about your righteousness”, non-conforming child.

5. Maintaining A Home Where the Parents Have and Use Unbiblical Expectations

- a. Some parents expect next to nothing from their children.
 - (1) In such homes, children lose energy or passion for life because they are never expected

or helped to “reach forward to those things which are ahead” (Philippians 3:13) or to learn to work really hard unto Christ (Colossians 1:29 and 3:23).

(2) Parents must pray for wisdom on when to push their child and when to relax pressure.

b. In other homes, too much is expected.

(1) Competitive, omni-competent and perfectionistic parents push, push, push and demand more and more from their children. Some children seek to rise to the occasion while others just quit. Human experiences teaches us that unreasonable demands are the ideal breeding ground for discouragement.

(2) Do you recognize that your children have different personalities, different gifts and abilities than you? If your children regularly fail to measure up to your personal, high standards or have even quit trying, you might be demanding too much.

c. **“Train up a child in the way that he (or she) should go”** means that how we work with each child will be a little bit different from how we work with the other children. We are not seeking to create “Mini-Me’s” but people who are can stand on their own two feet before men and stand on the perfect atonement and imputed righteousness of Christ before God.

II. FAITHFUL AIMS AND PRACTICES OF BIBLICAL PARENTING

(TRAINING UP OUR CHILDREN IN THE DISCIPLINE & INSTRUCTION OF THE LORD)

1. Biblical Parents demonstrate that Jesus is central to their lives and home

- a. Jesus Christ is sometimes mentioned but too often not the real center of some Christian homes. His will is not paramount; His desires not noted; His glory not sought; His Word not obeyed, His covenant love not our security!
- b. In short, Jesus has the title but not the humble submission, fervent loyalty and open devotion of those who name His name.
- c. Some Christian homes can be all about establishing our own righteousness and the “self-righteousness” we expect from our children. (“What a nice family with such nice children.”)
- d. After we sing the song, “My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness”, do we openly seek to apply it and live it out in our home?
- e. Do Dad and Mom openly show their love and devotion and submission to Christ?

2. Biblical Parents make much of God’s amazing grace in their home

- a. There should be no greater joy in our hearts or homes than the experiential knowledge that God loved us before time began, loves us now for Christ’s sake and has forgiven us all our sins!
 - (1) 2nd Corinthians 5:21--“For God made Him who knew no sin to become sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”
 - (2) John 10:10b--“I have come that you might have life and have it abundantly.”
- b. Hearts full of such wonders cannot keep quiet but must speak to God and others
 - (1) Psalm 16:11--“In Your presence is fullness of joy.”
 - (2) Psalm 107:2--“Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.”
 - (3) Matthew 12:34--“For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.”
- c. Hearts full of the love of Christ ought to overflow to our spouse and children.
 - (1) We should be the biggest cheerleaders for our children! (It should never be in doubt that we are our children’s biggest fans!)
 - (2) We should tell them everyday (and more than once) that we love them.
 - (3) Our love and affection should be incarnated by hugs, ‘terms of endearment’, et al.
 - (4) Withholding love and affection is a sin. Counselors call it “passive aggressive behavior”. It means we fight and hurt one another by withholding our love and affection.
 - (5) Proverbs 27:5--“Better is open rebuke than love that is concealed.”

3. Biblical Parents model repentance and faith in their home & before their children

- a. You would be surprised how many children have never seen or heard a parent say “I’m sorry; I was wrong; would you forgive me for my sin of _____?” and ask forgiveness!
- b. We tell our children to apologize like they mean it but do not model that very thing. How hard it is to do something you have never seen acted out before, especially if your role models fail.
- c. E.g. Remember the problem of the Lone Ranger
- d. Naming our sins and asking forgiveness from those we have wronged (and those who witnessed the wrong but were not the recipient) should be a regular occurrence in our homes (unless you think you have a sinless home and that shows you have another problem!)
- e. Modeling faith means you communicate to your children your personal trust and confidence in God, His Word, His promises and His threats.
- f. Faithful parents believe God promises & speak about their trust with the children; examples:
 - (1) God always forgives those who repent (1st John 1:7-9)
 - (2) God always cares for those who are His (Hebrews 13:5)
 - (3) God works all things together for your good and His glory (Romans 8:28)

4. Biblical Parents seek to build a home noted for love and encouragement

- a. The VERY BEST PLACE in the whole world should be a Christian home!
- b. The love of God the Father, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit ought to permeate our homes as an outgrowth of permeating our Christian lives as parents.
- c. If I can’t be at church with my extended family of God in its atmosphere of love and mutual encouragement, I want to be with my own family, in our home, the local family of God with our love and encouragement.
- d. We should seek to create such a home atmosphere that our children’s friends and the neighbor kids would rather hang out at our home with us than in their own homes!
- e. We should not be known as the NEGATIVE FAMILY but the POSITIVE FAMILY.
 - (1) That means that our children, their friends and our neighbors do not view our family as the one that doesn’t do things (“The DON’T family next door doesn’t do Halloween, or Christmas or New Years or Sunday. Their home is dark and negative and they never seem to smile, laugh or enjoy life.”) (e.g. Think of the Klopek’s in the movie, THE BURBS!)
 - (2) In contrast, the DO family comes up with creative alternatives to worldly reasons to celebrate life. Their home is inviting, positive, warm and life-affirming. They are known in their neighborhood and their extended family by their biblical convictions AND their out-going love.

5. Biblical Parents listen to and learn from others.

- a. Effective and faithful parents seek counsel from their pastors and elders, their own parents, and other parents who have done well with their children following biblical guidelines.
- b. Good parents even listen to their own children. (As our children grow up, they sometimes confide in each other things they won’t confide in their parents. Ask your children what they think in going on in the problem at hand in your home.)
- c. Good parents take advantage of the biblical counsel available in biblically faithful materials/books:
 - a. But you say, “I’m not a reader.” (Remember to train your left hand when playing basketball !)
 - b. Become a reader and listener to tapes and CD’s and watcher of DVD’s.
 - c. God promises no blessings to those who remain willfully ignorant
- d. Good parents receive with kindness the input offered by unbelievers BUT they evaluate and weigh the input by biblical criteria. They know that not all counsel is good counsel.

BIBLICAL RESOURCES FOR GROWING

--AS A CHRISTIAN MAN, HUSBAND, FATHER

--AS A CHRISTIAN WOMAN, WIFE, MOTHER

RESOURCES FOR A FAITHFUL MAN, HUSBAND, FATHER:

1. James Dobson, *STRAIGHT TALK TO MEN*; Tyndale (how to man-up in every area of your life)
2. James Dobson, *WHAT WIVES WISH THEIR HUSBANDS KNEW ABOUT WOMEN*; Tyndale
(The most frequent causes of depression among wives and what the husband can do about it.)
3. Mark Chansky, *MANLY DOMINION*; Calvary Press (a bugle call to be a man, not a man-child)
4. Rick Phillips, *THE MASCULINE MANDATE*; Reformation Trust (ditto)
5. Meg Meeker, *STRONG FATHERS, STRONG DAUGHTERS*; Regnery/Gateway (the impact of a father on his daughters)
6. Stuart Scott, *THE EXEMPLARY HUSBAND*; Focus Christian Publishing (shows the biblical standard)
7. John MacArthur, *BEING A DAD WHO LEADS*; Harvest House (the head leads the body)

RESOURCES FOR A FAITHFUL WOMAN, WIFE, MOTHER:

1. Martha Peace, *THE EXCELLENT WIFE*; Focus Christian Publishing (shows the biblical standard)
2. James Dobson, *WHAT WIVES WISH THEIR HUSBANDS KNEW ABOUT WOMEN*; Tyndale
3. Meg Meeker, *STRONG FATHERS, STRONG DAUGHTERS*; Regnery/Gateway (why your daughter strongly needs your husband's direction and input in her life)
4. Meg Meeker, *BOYS OUGHT TO BE BOYS*; Regnery/Gateway (important information for home-schooling mothers who are tempted to treat boys like girls)
5. Meg Meeker, *STRONG MOTHERS, STRONG SONS*; Ballantine (the impact of a mother on her sons)
6. Elizabeth Payson Prentiss, *STEPPING HEAVENWARD*; Solid Ground Christian Books (what a godly woman looks like as she seeks to build her life based upon God and His Word)

RESOURCES FOR BOTH TO DIGEST AND DISCUSS:

1. Tedd Tripp, *SHEPHERDING A CHILD'S HEART*; Shepherd Press (raising children in general)
2. Paul David Tripp, *AGE OF OPPORTUNITY*; P & R (young adults; a.k.a. "teenagers")
3. James Dobson, *THE NEW DARE TO DISCIPLINE*; Tyndale (the call to exercise faithful discipline)
4. Bruce Ray, *WITHHOLD NOT CORRECTION*; P & R (another clear call to faithful discipline)
5. Jerry Bridges, *THE BOOKENDS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE*; Crossway--the resources of God to be what He has called you to be!
6. Meg Meeker, *BOYS OUGHT TO BE BOYS*; Regnery/Gateway (how to grow up young men and not treat your boys like they were girls)
7. Joel Beeke, *THE FAMILY AT WORSHIP*; Reformation Heritage--best place to begin
8. Joel Beeke, *THE FAMILY AT CHURCH*; Reformation Heritage--ditto