

Biblical Principles Of Parenting – Prov 4:10-11 (Part 5)

Prov 16:20; We're in a series on parenting; The point of which, is to build your family on the rock solid truths of God's Word

Truths that are foundational for a life and lineage built to last

And having covered 6 of them, from seeking the Lord yourself to teaching your kids the Word – Principle #7 is something you might not *associate* with biblical parenting

Principle #7 – Help them to think (Prov 16:20)

Help them to ponder; Help them consider; Help them reason and reflect

Prov 16:20 – *Whoever gives thought to the word* [the word spoken, or the matter at hand] *will discover good*; Whoever gives *thought*

You can teach your kids all the information you want; But if you don't help them process it, if you don't help them sort it out, put it together, and use it . . .

It's all for naught

It's like those dreaded story problems in math or physics

You can teach a student all the facts about velocity and mass and time all you want – but if you don't teach them what to do with it . . .

If you don't teach them how to apply it – they'll never know when and where Person A meets Person B, while traveling 40mph from one direction and 60 from another

And by the same token, if you don't teach your child to break a thought down, surmise its assumptions, consider the implications, and assess the conclusions . . .

You'll fail to help them think, and fail to help them navigate through life to the best of their ability and the glory of God

They'll miss out on the best, get duped by the worst, and stumble repeatedly

We must help our kids to think

➤ Especially so, when you consider that it's a concept all *over* the Bible; Like in . . .

Prov 14:15 – *The simple* [the naïve; someone lacking depth] *believes everything, but the prudent gives thought to his steps.*

Wise people *think* about their life; They ponder and *consider* the things they hear, see, and do; They're not just reactive, but proactive

Ps 48:9 – *We have thought on your steadfast love, O God, in the midst of your temple.*

His steadfast love; One of the *most* important topics to think about; And it's been the practice of God's people in God's place, for centuries

Ps 119:59 – *When I think on my ways, I turn my feet to your testimonies*; To God's truth Thinking about your life from a godly perspective leads to godly actions

2 Tim 2:7 – *Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.* Good things happen when we think in the Spirit*****

➤ And think critically; We must help our kids think critically

Not negatively or pessimistically; But thoroughly, and broadly, and discerningly

Sizing up a situation accurately, seeing through the fog, and discerning the issues

Help them think *that* way; So that they too can discover good (Prov 16:20)

And you can do that 5 ways; The first, is to *help them* . . .

• Assess the truth

Help your kids to assess the truth of a matter; Help them *measure* people's words instead of just accepting them; Including the words they read

Just b/c someone wrote something, doesn't mean it's true; Just b/c it's said, doesn't make it right; Assess the truth

That's what the *Bereans* did; The people in Acts 17; They *received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.* (11)

To see if they were true; They weren't skeptical, but neither were they gullible

They received what was said with all *eagerness*, but they also checked it; Assessed it Help your kids to think critically by assessing the truth of a matter; In *every* area of life

• Smell the battle

Discern what's at stake in a situation; Figure out the *reason* for someone's position; What they're trying to accomplish; What agenda is being advanced, but not verbalized

Like Stephen did in Acts 7 when he addressed the Jewish council; He smelled the battle between their desire for power, and the work of Christ among his people

And if you're going to help your kids think, you have to help them do the same

You have to help them read between the lines, and point out the biases and perspectives that are silent, but there

3rd, help them . . .

• View things differently

From a different perspective; It could be an opposing view; It could be a big picture view;

It could be a more detailed view; It might be temporary, or even permanent

Whatever the case, help them change their perspective and see things differently

Like Paul did with the church leaders in Jerusalem, regarding Gentile believers

It was a different view, that literally changed the course of Christianity

• Identify core issues

Those things in a situation or conversation, that if left unattended or unaddressed, make the rest of it a moot point

Like talking about immigration without talking about the law; Or political candidates apart from morals; Leave things like that out, and the rest of the conversation is moot

• Ask good questions

Don't just give your kids the answers to life, help them ask questions; Help them discover it for themselves

Like the conversation I just had with one of our girls about supporting a needy child in another country; Lots of organizations do that and she wanted to know what I thought

And though I've thought a lot about that over the years, instead of just telling her, I posed a bunch of questions; Like . . .

"Would that be a bad thing to do, supporting a child that way?" No

"Is feeding a child the most *important* thing you can do?" No

"What is?" Telling them about Jesus

"And what is God's primary vehicle for doing that?" The church

"Are the gospel and food mutually exclusive?" No

"Are there people or organizations doing both?" I don't know

“Do you think it would be a good idea to research it and pray?” Yes
And that’s where we left it; B/c I wanted to help *her* think (**Summary**)

Don’t just give your kids the answers, help them ask good questions; Help them to think
So they can find solutions to story problems that don’t even exist yet

Principle #8 – Show them how to live (Prov 4:10-11)

Prov 4:10-11; Training up your kids in the way they should go involves *far* more than just teaching them the *content* of this book

You have to show them how to *apply* it; You have to *show* them

Like Solomon did with his son; V10 – *Hear, my son, and accept my words, that the years of your life may be many. [11] I have taught you the way of wisdom; I have led you in the paths of uprightness.*

When you lead someone in *paths of uprightness*, you’re showing them how to live;
How to live for the Lord

Just like a wilderness guide shows you where to go and how to survive in the wild
Something foreign to most; We have to be shown

And the same is true of our kids; They have to be *shown* how to live; Especially for the Lord; B/c that too is foreign to them; And contrary to their nature; Their sin nature

So it’s our responsibility as parents to guide them; Not just *tell* them where to go and what to do, but do it ourselves; Actually *lead* them in *paths of uprightness*; 3 in particular

The first of which, is integrity; Show your kids how to live . . .

• **By walking with integrity**

As in be the same at home, work, and church; No matter where you are, live and behave according to the same set of values and principles

If you’re ornery at home, sappy at church, and cordial at work – you’re not walking with integrity

If you’re not the same when you’re alone as you are when you’re not, you’re living a lie

And your kids will see it; They’ll find you out

Prov 10:9 says – *Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out.* Especially in the home

If you live a double life, it won’t be long until you’re exposed

But that’s only part of the problem; The other part, is that your kids will do the same****

They will live as you live; And walk as you walk; If u live a life of deceit, so will they
Which means it’s *critical* as a parent, to walk with integrity

2nd, show them how to live . . .

• **By working hard**

By modeling a strong work ethic

Prov 6:10-11 says – *A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest [a little laziness; even a little], [11] and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man.* Suddenly and overpowering

And yet, a poor work ethic is epidemic these days; It’s rampant; Even among believers*****

Way too many people don’t know how to work; And don’t *want* to, even if they do

They don’t know how to put their nose to the grindstone, and they don’t know how to keep it there until the job is done or the day is over

They don’t know how to apply themselves to the task at *hand*, nor look for things that need to be done elsewhere

And they certainly don’t know how to stay at it without stopping every 10 minutes to talk or check their social media

It’s epidemic; Just talk to any employer

- And it’s our responsibility as parents to teach and show our kids otherwise
Which you can do by adhering to some really simple practices
Like getting up earlier than necessary; And going to work when you don’t feel like it;
And regulating your TV time; And working around the house
And getting things done; That’s what my parents did
And if you do the same, you’ll model a work ethic that sets your kids apart for life

And then last, the last *path of uprightness* to show your kids, is wisdom; Show them how to live . . .

• **By growing in wisdom**

Wisdom, referring to the ability to rightly apply *knowledge* to a situation at hand; Critical thinking is the ability to *discern* that knowledge, while wisdom is rightly *applying* it
And one of the best things you can do for your kids, is grow in it yourself

B/c just like *laziness* is epidemic, so too is ignorance; Functional ignorance is a *plague* in our culture; It is; And it’s sweeping our society like wildfire

Where people know just enough to get by in life, but not enough to excel
Just enough to live, but not enough to flourish

And the problem, is that they’re perfectly happy about it; Including our kids
“Who needs more wisdom? I don’t; And I *certainly* don’t want to work for it”
Oh that might not be a conscious thought, but that’s certainly their default

- Meanwhile, Solomon couldn’t get *enough* of it; Or say enough about its value
Prov 3:13-18 – [13] *Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who gets understanding, [14] for the gain from her is better than gain from silver and her profit better than gold. [15] She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her. [16] Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. [17] Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. [18] She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her; those who hold her fast are called blessed.*

What more do you need? Wisdom is where it’s at; And if you’re going to show your kids how to live, you need to grow in it; And help them do the same

- And one of the fastest ways to do so, is to read
If you want to grow in wisdom, put down the video controller and pick up a book; And make your kids do the same; 20 minutes a day; Just 20 minutes
B/c reading is one of the best ways to *grow* in understanding

And it's highly valued by *people* of understanding
Like the Apostle Paul; Who asked for his books/parchments while in prison (2 Tim 4)
That's the first thing you can do – pick up a book and read yourself

- 2nd, When your kids are little, read *to* them
It's one of the things we did *well* as parents; And, one of my fondest memories
Especially when I'd fall asleep mid-sentence, and feel them patting my chest to wake me up; We read to them; Over and over and over

Not that “One fish, two fish, red fish, blue fish” is particularly enlightening, but that it teaches them how to read for themselves; And how to gain understanding themselves
Which is wisdom in and of itself; Not to mention the wisdom in the kids Bible we read over and over

- Read yourself, read *to* them, and 3rd – when they're older read *with* them
Books where they can follow along as you read aloud

I remember reading the book *Holes* with the girls, just as the movie was coming out
And it just so happened that we finished one night about 8:30, and decided on a whim to jump in the car, race to the theater, and see the 9 o'clock showing
On a *school* night no less

Was that wise? Was that showing them how to live in *paths of uprightness*? I think so
B/c they learned that reading can be fun; And that wisdom is a joy
And that finishing strong in life often results in *more* good things; Like popcorn/pop

- If you want to battle the plague of ignorance in which your kids live . . .
If you want to avoid the mush-head syndrome of too much TV and too many video games; If you want their lives to be rich with knowledge and full of understanding . . .
Read, read, and read some more; The Bible first, and then something else (**Summary**)
Do it *for* them, do it *with* them, and do it *apart* from them

It's part of showing them how to live, and helping them to think
2 more principles to train up your child in the way they should go

Pray – Help us apply these things; And forgive us of our laziness; We want to glorify you in our parenting, and we want our kids to glorify you in their living