

## Parenting Tools:

### Respect



HOME  
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Instilling respect is one of the most important tasks you have as a parent. Respect is essential to creating a happy home and needs to be taught at an early age. Real love cannot exist apart from respect. Children who are “loved” but not taught the importance of respect for others are really not loved at all. They are simply spoiled. The verb respect means “to listen to, to heed, to hold in high regard, to esteem.” Respect is the basis for Jesus’ command, “And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise” (Luke 6:31). Remember, “little eyes” are watching you. Are you following God’s command? You are their role model!

How can you raise respectful children?

**Teach through your words and actions.** Model what it looks like to be respectful of others. Ask God to help you in all areas of your life and to guide your words and actions. Use good manners when responding to your kids and to others. Meditate on Psalm 25:5, which says, “Lead me in Your truth and teach me...”

**Praise your child.** Truthful praise has a tremendous impact on your child. You can express praise to your child not only verbally, but also physically, through smiles and hugs. Positive messages reinforce a child’s goodness and encourage him or her to have good behavior. Communicate over and over again to your children that you love them! As 1 John 4:7 reminds us, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God...”

**Teach obedience.** One of the most important responsibilities for a parent who wishes to create a respectful child is to teach the child obedience. How a parent responds when a child is being defiant determines the relationship between the parent and child. If the

parent leads with firm and loving discipline, the result will be a secure and respectful child. When properly applied, loving discipline works. It stimulates tender affection, made possible by mutual respect between a parent and a child. It allows God to be introduced to children. It encourages a child to respect other people. Ephesians 6:1-3 says, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother,’ which is the first commandment with promise: ‘that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.’”

**Teach your child to serve others.** When you teach your children to respect, you teach them to value themselves and others—and that will make them blessings to the world. This enables them to have a servant’s heart as Galatians 5:13 instructs, “...through love serve one another.”

**Teach polite responses.** Your child can show respect by using good manners. By learning to say “please” and “thank you” at an early age, manners will become a normal routine. Make sure you model this in responding to your child. Reflect on Psalm 119:103 as you consider polite responses to model for your children: “How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth.”

When your children respect you, they can more easily respect God, others, and themselves. If you are not modeling kindness and respect, you cannot teach it. Exemplify God in all you do! “The righteous man walks in his integrity; his children are blessed after him,” says Proverbs 20:7.