

Biblical Principles Of Parenting (Part 8)

Prov 1; This is the last message in our series on parenting; And we've covered a lot – from seek the Lord yourself, to make sure you discipline
And if I had more time, I'd include others like – have fun, wrestle often, make memories, and hug them every day
The purpose of which, is to raise our kids according to the truths of God's Word, for a house built to last (**Intro**)

And while many of those truths, *many* of the passages in Scripture *apply* to parenting, some of them would be considered **Pillar Passages**; Primary passages; Like . . .

Prov 22:6 – *Train up a child in the way he should go*

Dt 6:4-9 – *You shall teach God's commands diligently to your kids*

Eph 6:1-4 – *Bring your children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord*

Heb 12:5-11 – *What son is there whom his father does not discipline?*

Prov 13:24 – *Whoever s pares the rod hates his son*

Ps 127:3-5 – *Children are a heritage from the LORD*

Those are the main Scriptures about parenting; And I would encourage you to remember one or two, and write the rest in the margin; Next to them (**Summary**)

➤ That said, there are 2 *remaining* principles I want to commend to you, that are last, but certainly not least; Starting with this – *communicate* with your kids; That's . . .

Principle #12 – **Communicate with them (Prov 1:8)**

Talk to them; And talk *with* them; A principle found all *over* the Word; With Proverbs the tip of the spear; It's *filled* with references to parental communication

Like Prov 1:8 where Solomon says – *Hear, my son, your father's instruction*

He's *talking* to him; Communicating with him

Or how about Prov 2:1 – *My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you [if you listen to my communication] . . . [5] then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.*

Or how about Prov 3:1? *My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments; He taught; He communicated*

Or 4:1 – *Hear, O sons, a father's instruction; He was communicating*

And 5:1 – *My son, be attentive to my wisdom; incline your ear to my understanding*
Proverbs is *filled* with references to parental communication

Not only that, but . . .

• **The Bible is full of examples**

Real life examples; From Abraham talking to his son Isaac, Isaac to Jacob, Jacob to his 12 sons, Jethro to his son-in-law Moses, David to Solomon . . .

The Bible is *full* of examples, of parental communication

Even the Apostle Paul communicated to his *child in the faith* – Timothy (1 Tim 1:2)

And we ought to do the same; *Communicate* with your kids

B/c it's also . . .

• **It's what God does with us**

That's the 2nd part of this; Communicate with them, b/c that's what God does with us; *His* sons and daughters; **Ps 19:1-3** says . . .

[1] *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.*

[2] *Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. [3] There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard.*

IOW the whole world is one great big bullhorn for God's communication
Every moment of every day he's pouring out speech through creation

➤ And, he communicates to us *explicitly* in his Word, the Bible (**Prov 2:6**)
For the LORD gives wisdom [it says]; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding; Knowledge and understanding . . .

That was recorded in the pages of Scripture, as men *were carried along by the Holy Spirit* (2 Pet 1:21)

Communicate with *your* kids, b/c that's what God does with his*****

3rd . . .

• **It's what God commands**

Ps 145:4 says – *One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts.*

It's a command – *you shall*; Not *just* for parents, but certainly including them

➤ If you're going to raise your son or daughter according to *the discipline and instruction of the Lord* (Eph 6:4), you have to converse with them

If you're going to train them up in the way they should go (Prov 22:6), you have to talk to them

If you're going to explain the gospel, teach the Word, help them think, show them how to live, and reprove them in discipline – *you have* to communicate

There's *a time to keep silence, and a time to speak* the Bible says (Eccl 3:7) – and parenting is *definitely* a time to speak

And then 4th . . .

• **It's a two-way street**

Communicating with your kids goes both ways

Parents, don't let your son use one-word answers; Or no answers at all

“But that's all he does, Pastor; He doesn't talk”

Then *make* him talk; “You're not leaving the house until you give me 3 sentences about your day”

“You're not playing a video game until you answer my questions and offer new information; You're not getting a phone or a car or anything else . . .

Unless you participate in family discussions”

➤ They don't talk b/c you don't *make* them talk; You don't engage them; You don't force the issue and *make* them throw the ball back

Far too many parents just give up on this; And in so doing, they add to the generation of kids these days who don't know how to communicate

Not verbally; Not clearly; Not compellingly

They can text; But they can't carry on a conversation; They can't articulate a thought

And if they try – it's often rambling or incoherent; Carrying it right into adulthood

And then wondering why nobody listens to them; Or why they can't get ahead; Or get the *job* they want

It's happening; And it starts at home, with you; Their parent (**Summary**)

➤ So I want to give you 6 ways to *encourage* communication; 6 ways to develop it
Call them . . .

Best Practices

Best practices for communicating with your kids; The first is this . . .

1. Ask good questions

Open-ended questions; Questions that can't be answered with a yes or no; And if they can, ask why; "Did you have a good day at school?" "Yes." "Why?"

Ask good questions, and don't allow a grunt for an answer

2. Do high-low

At the dinner table, at least once a week, have everybody go around and share a *high* from their day, and a *low* from their day; And talk about them

We did this; And found it to be a great way to find out what was going on in our girls' lives; And hearts; And it afforded us some great teaching moments

3. Take them out

I'm referring mainly to dads on this one; Take your kids out, one at a time, once a week

It could be breakfast, lunch, coffee, or ice cream – just make sure it's scheduled & kept
I did this with our girls on Thursday mornings before school – for breakfast; And it was one of the best things I've ever done

4. Cater to their time

When do *they* like to talk? Is it bedtime? In the car? After school? Over a snack?

Whenever it is, find it and cater to it

If it's after school, have the milk and cookies ready

If it's in the car, keep the radio off; If it's bedtime, allow extra time

Find *their* time, and cater to it; Not that it's the *only* time to communicate, don't let them think *that*; But make sure it's *one* of them

And make sure you listen more than you talk; Make it *their* time

5. Address important issues

Issues like sex, and puberty; Masturbation, drugs, alcohol, marriage, homosexuality

You name it, you should address it; Openly and freely

Don't ever let your kids think that there's a taboo subject w/ you; Talk about *everything*

And do it early; Early and often; B/c I guarantee they're hearing it from others

We thought we were well *ahead* of the curve in all this, until our oldest, at the age of 4, heard all about sex from one of her 6 year old cousins at a family funeral

That's great; Thank you so much for that

So we did some quick research, found some solid age-appropriate books, and began working through them – her and Becky

Address important issues early, and don't stop; Don't stop

➤ I remember a time just a few years ago on vacation, with two of our girls in college . . .

When somebody brought up a slang term about something sexual, as we were driving back to our place

And before long, one question led to another and another and another – so that we ended up sitting in the car, in the garage, in the dark . . .

Talking about all things sex-related, for like *30 minutes*

And there were a few times that Becky and I were wide-eyed and white-knuckled

It was open, it was explicit, and it was needed

Don't be afraid, and don't hesitate, to address important issues with your kids

6. Journal with them

From the time our girls could barely print, we would send them to bed and give them time to write a note to us about their day, in a journal

And then, after we tucked them in, we'd sit outside their room and respond to their entry, with one of our own; On the facing page

You want to talk about precious, you want to talk about insightful, you want to talk about endearing – that was it

And a great way to teach them how to write (**Summary**)

6 practices, to help you live out the biblical principle, to communicate with your kids

➤ And then last, but certainly not least . . .

Principle #13 – Pray for them and with them (1 Sam 12:23)

In 1 Sam 12:23, Samuel addresses the Israelites at the end of his storied career as prophet, priest, and leader

And he says something to them, the children of Israel for whom *he* was responsible . . .

That I think applies just as much to us (**verse**), and the children for whom *we* are responsible

As for me [he said], *far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you*

Notice 2 quick things: (A) It was *sinful* to not pray for those in his care; (B) He was all about it; He was all *about* praying for them

Indicating he already *was*, by saying it would be wrong to *stop* praying

And if that applies to a leader of *people*, how much more to a leader of *kids*; A family

Where the bond is tighter, the connection closer, and the heart fonder

We must pray for our kids; They need it, and it's our responsibility*****

➤ So instead of talking about it, I'd like to take a few minutes to do it

Pray for your kids, your grandkids, your future kids, or someone else's kids (**slide**)
Pray that they would . . . Know the Lord; Love the Lord; Trust the Lord; Serve the Lord; Return to the Lord

Let's do that right now; In the quietness of your heart, or with your spouse, or both
Just get before the Lord and pray; And when the time comes, I'll close it (3 minutes)

Pray – Lord, thank you for our kids; What a blessing they are; Would you draw them to yourself? Would you fill them with the knowledge of your will more and more? Would you spur them on to walk in a manner worthy of their calling? Would you bear fruit in them for every good work? Would you give them a hunger for your Word? Would you strengthen them for your purposes? Would you stretch their faith? Would you prepare for them a spouse? Would you bless their union if already married? Would you return the prodigals? Would you save the lost? Would you restore the broken? Would you heal the sick? We trust you for them, and ask these things in the powerful name of Jesus, Amen.***** We need to pray for our kids

➤ And, we need to pray *with* them; Pray *for* them, and pray *with* them
At bedtime, dinnertime, special times, any time
Lead them in prayer, and let *them* pray; Encouraging them to do so

It could be in the car when something comes up
It could be in your living room in the middle of your evening
It could be one-on-one at bedtime; It could be all *together* before you turn in
It could be circling up before you say goodbye
It could be over the phone; It could be anytime and all the time, and should be
The point being, don't miss an opportunity to pray *with* them, in addition to praying *for* them

➤ In fact, sometimes you should do it at the same *time*; Pray for them and with them at the same *time*
Few things bless people more; And your kids are no different
If you want to see them glow, if you want to put wind in their sails – pray *for* them and *with* them in the same setting

It's principle #13, to train up your child in the way they should go (**Summary**)
Biblical principles, God-honoring principles, for a house built to last

If you're in the middle of that, God bless you; Keep on
If you're well beyond those years, pray for those who follow; And plant seeds of truth – give them these messages
If you don't yet have kids, encourage those who do; And prepare well
B/c a house built to last starts with a good foundation

Pray – Father, we're so thankful for our children; And so thankful for your Word to parent them well; Keep these things ever before us; And strengthen us for the task at hand
We give now, with gratitude in our hearts, for all you've given us

Close – World Relief Training (11 am, Lower Classroom)
Next week – Harvest Update to lay out some long-term initiatives we've adopted as elders
Visitor Packet; Elder