



Foundations of Faith A Biblical Approach to Parenting #6 Applying the Principles of Parenting

One of the most wonderful aspects of the Christian life is learning to apply biblical principles in specific situations. After all, learning is all about doing – it’s putting into practice the truth of God’s Word. James says in James 1:22, *“But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.”*

Take a moment and look over the major points of the lessons we have studied.

Lesson #1: The Goal of Parenting

1. Parenting requires a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, a reliable source of truth (i.e. the Word of God), and an understanding that children are born with a sin nature.
2. The goal of parenting is to bring the children up to please God by being like Jesus Christ (a servant, submissive to authority, and concerned about the spiritual life of others).

Lesson #2: The Heart of a Child

1. Parents need to help their children deal with the “idols” (i.e. whatever the child would make more important than pleasing God).

Two questions to consider in helping us to know if something is an “idol”:

- 1) *How does a child respond when he/she doesn’t get it (i.e. the desire)?*
- 2) *Is the child willing to sin in order to get it (i.e. the desire)?*

2. Parents must maintain a “God-centered home” and not a “child-centered home.”

Lesson #3: The Father’s Charge

1. The father is ultimately responsible for what goes on in a home – including parenting.
2. The father has been given special admonition to remember the goal of parenting and to not provoke his children to an angry lifestyle or exasperate them and discourage them by taking away any hope of changing and doing right.
3. Parents have to avoid the two extremes: Being 1) a *passive* parent 2) an *impatient* parent.

Lesson #4: Teaching Your Children

1. Teaching simply means helping a child build inner convictions.
2. Parents need to teach their children because parents are responsible to God and must give an account; each child has a sin nature and needs to be taught, and parenting is a “disciple-making” process.
3. Parents can teach by using Q & A, everyday life situations, their own example, a formal worship time, and using the help of the church and other appointed authorities.
4. Parents are to teach truths regarding salvation, Christian growth, foundational truths, and practical truths for everyday life such as the following:
 - Teens focus: Seeing the opportunities to grow in each struggle
 - Youth (6-12): Developing character qualities
 - Children (birth – 5): Respecting and obeying authority

Lesson #5: The Place of Discipline

1. Parents must avoid the wrong idea that discipline alone is enough.
2. Parents must remember that God disciplines His children.
3. Parents must view biblical discipline as having the goal of correction, not punishment.
4. Communication, love, strong convictions, and rules that are reasonable, definable, and enforceable, accompanied with appropriate rewards and corrections are necessary ingredients in the parenting process.

Let’s take a look at some case studies and include some of these principles we’ve studied!

Case #1

Dakota is a 3-month-old who is still not sleeping through the night. Every night her mother nurses her to sleep, but has to get up again to feed her at 1 a.m. and 4 a.m. Dakota is well cared for, and her mother loves her very much. However, the mother is getting very tired physically.

A. What are some truths about the child that a parent will especially need to remember at this time?

B. What are some “put off’s” and “put on’s” that the child needs to learn?

<i>Put Off</i> <i>(actions & thoughts that need to stop)</i>	<i>Put On</i> <i>(actions & thoughts that need to occur)</i>

C. Will a spanking help a child in this situation? Why or why not?

Case #2

Kara is a 10-year-old who has “flipped” over a new boy she met at school. She has started to spend over an hour on the phone with her best friend discussing what he said today, who he looked at, and whether or not he noticed her. Her school homework paper is filled with doodles of hearts and his and her name. She is not getting her assignments done and you are afraid it will hurt her grades.

A. Is this just a passing fad to be ignored? Why or why not?

B. What are some possible “idols” in Kara’s heart?

C. What are some specific topics that her parents need to teach her?

D. What types of limits/plans would you recommend her parents implement to correct these problems?

Case #3

At 12, John has “started” arguing with his mother. It seems that in every discussion, there are some words that just aren’t accurate enough for John. Little things can “set him off,” and he is short-tempered and disrespectful. Dad has been busy a lot lately and has had little time to spend with John.

A. How would you use Ephesians 6:1-2 to help John look at the situation from God’s point of view?

Ephesians 6:1-2 *“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise).”*

B. What impact does the father’s absence have on this situation? What biblical advice would you give to this dad?

C. What is more important to John than obeying the Scripture?

Case #4

Chad is a 3-year-old. Although he used to go to Sunday School with no problem, he suddenly decided that he doesn’t want to go. There is nothing different about the Sunday School, and when he gets picked up, he always acts like he had a great time! Now Chad is clinging to Mommy and crying, and refusing to be dropped off. Chad is receiving a spanking every Sunday, but he still doesn’t want to go in the door.

A. In what ways is Chad manipulating his mom?

B. Should the parents assume that Chad has had a “negative experience” that is causing this behavior? Why or why not?

C. At this point, should the mom consider some alternative forms of discipline? If so, what would they be?

D. How can Chad’s parents prepare him for the event -- the evening before, the morning of, and on the way to church?

Case #5

Mary and Jim have developed an elaborate plan to deal with their 10 year old son Max's behavior. Max has not been interested in cleaning his room, and it has become messy. Since Max likes money, he is rewarded with money every day he cleans his room. After three months of success, Max has \$12. However, he has started to allow his room to get messy again. Jim is considering raising the reward to \$2/week.

A. What is the main "idol" of Max's heart?

B. Should John be receiving an allowance for cleaning his room? Why or why not?

Case #6

It seems that every time Robbie and Rachel go over to Grandma's for the weekend, they are "sheer terror" when they come home. They don't want to go to bed on time, they want to have a short-order cook in the kitchen, and they don't listen to instructions. Jeane, their mother, remembers life at home as being a lot more strict than what it is for the grandkids.

A. How does Deuteronomy 4:9 give guidance in this situation?

Deuteronomy 4:9 *"Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things which your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons."*

B. What should the parents communicate to the grandparents to solve this problem?

C. How can the parents better prepare the children for trips to the grandparents?
