



SIX QUESTIONS TO HELP PARENTS TRAIN CHILDREN FOR GOD'S GLORY



1. Am I committed to being a godly example to follow?

- a. How am I leading the way by example?
- b. Study the following Scriptures on imitation
Set an example: 1 Cor. 4:14-16; 1 Cor. 11:1; Phil. 3:17; Phil. 4:9

Imitate Christ: Phil. 2:5; 1 Peter 2:21-23; 1 John 3:16
- c. Can I identify what's going on when I am impatient?
 - look at what was going on (what was child doing, what was I doing, what were my thoughts)
 - connect my thoughts with the child's action and my reaction of impatience
 - connect my reaction of impatience with the sinful mindset that resulted in the impatience.
 - eg. If you are upset about being late for church, identify that you are more concerned about being on time than nurturing worship of God in the child, which would mean you prepare ahead.

2. Would the child say he or she is loved?

- a. Do you intentionally love your child in the language he or she best perceive and receive love?
 - Five love languages can help find out how to love them more thoughtfully
- b. Love languages cannot be the whole story (Matthew 5:43-48).
The higher standard of Christian living has to be repentance.
- c. Love has to be rooted in God (1 John 4:7-12).
 - Love is received from God, child is the object of God's love through you.

3. What really motivates the child?

- a. Focusing on the heart of the child averts merely behavioristic parenting.
- b. Parental instruction must include heart to heart communication.
 - Find out what is going on in the heart of the child.
 - "When you _____, what did you hope would happen?"
 - Use "Questions to ask the reveal the heart of a child."

4. What is the most effective and beneficial way to instruct the child?

- a. The most important early childhood lesson is for children to learn (by age 5) that they are individuals under authority. Ultimately, God's authority; this is represented in the home by parents' delegated authority.
 - Use clear, concise commands with communicated consequences
 - Address defiance (sins of commission)
 - Teach obedience to God ordained authority (Ask first whether I obey authority?)
 - Teach child to obey without challenge, without excuse and without delay.
Right away, all the way, with a happy heart.
- b. In middle childhood (6-12 yrs), begin to work on character
 - address behavior that is wrong but not specifically defiant (sins of omission)
 - teach dependability, kindness, helpful actions, humility, self-control

- address a selfish lack of concern for parent's busyness
- c. Focus on moral behavior first, moral reasoning later when abstract concepts can be grasped (teen years).
 - Learning patterns of moral behavior will create a context in which to understand moral reasoning.
 - Not allowing a child to grab toys from others creates a context in which to teach about putting others first (Phil. 2:3-4).
- d. Teaching should be dialogical much of the time.
 - two-way communication – the older the child, the longer the communication
- e. Teaching should be demonstrative much of the time
 - Take advantage of "teachable moments"
 - Show children what social or life skills look like
 - eg. Don't say "Love is not rude"
 - rather look for concrete ways to be polite, eg. the interrupt rule
 - touch parents arm and wait until asked to speak.
 - apologize aloud if interrupted.
 - eg. Don't say "You're being too loud"
 - rather use "use inside or outside voice", demonstrating / role playing level of voices
- f. Structure training in terms of "put off/renew the mind/put on" instead of just "don't do" (Ephesians 4:22-24)

5. How can the child be motivated to learn and to excel? (effective incentives)

- a. When is extrinsic motivation appropriate?
 - compliments, money, candy
 - It's appropriate when there's no internal drive to learn what is at stake
 - Not appropriate when it takes away intrinsic motivation or when child starts to manipulate parent
- b. When is intrinsic motivation appropriate?
 - after person is aware of the inherent value of completing the activity, the activity itself becomes the reward
 - this is appropriate when there has been sufficient exposure to an activity to learn its value

6. How can the child be reminded of the danger of disobeying God-ordained authority?

- a. The purpose of tangible consequences in parenting is to remove folly from the heart of the child by getting their attention.
 - Folly is dangerous if allowed to take root in the heart. A fools' heart is not open to reason (Prov. 26:3; 29:15).
 - The child is not open to reason, so need to get their attention, connecting tangible consequences with instruction.
- b. Spanking can't be apart from instruction (Proverbs 10:13; 13:24; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13,14; 26:3; 29:15)