



**The Little Red Book
For Parents**

Parenting the Next Generation

Pastor Bruce Edwards

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by
Bruce Edwards

The Little Red Book
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ISBN 0-80000-000-0

Preface

Parents,

“The Little Red Book for Parents” is an excerpt from my book on marriage and the family titled *“Made to Last – How to Have a Great Marriage & Great Kids”*. I wanted to quickly get into the hands of parents the chapters from this book pertaining to raising children because today's parents need all the help they can get to effectively raise this generation to be world changers and planet shakers for God. The Biblical principles taught in this book are key to being able to successfully raise Godly children. God has provided in His Word the guidance and instruction we need as parents to have GREAT kids. We not only want to share the principles needed as parents, but also to share practical

insights and ways to apply them in the home. Your children don't need you to be a perfect parent, they need you to be a Godly parent. I trust the following pages will be a help towards that end and a blessing to you.

In His Service,

Bruce

*“Not by might nor by power, but by
My Spirit,’ Says the LORD of hosts.”*

Zechariah 4:6

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Introduction

Parenting today is a lot different from parenting just a couple of decades ago. Changes in the dynamics of our society such as: both parents working, longer work hours, the disappearing of moral values, erosion of the family, the proliferation of technology - internet, cell phones, social media, etc. have all made parenting in today's world much more difficult, complex and challenging. So, how are parents in such a fast paced, ever changing world going to be able to effectively raise Godly Children?

“Parenting the Next Generation” is a book designed to help parents do exactly that: be prepared and quipped to effectively face these challenges and build a strong foundation for your family. It outlines Biblical principles and guidelines that empower you as the parent to provide the guidance and training your child

needs in the world today and to be able to develop their fullest potential and fulfill God's plan for their life.

Children are a blessing from the Lord to grace our lives with fulfillment, meaning, happiness and satisfaction. God placed our children into our care to love and to train for righteousness. God designed them to be a blessing. We must pass on Biblical values to our children and teenagers and prepare them to be light in our world. As a parent it is your responsibility to lead and guide your children. You need to show them the way and help them navigate through the perils of life. After all, as parents we are raising the "NEXT GENERATION". They will be our next leaders, professionals, educators, business people, pastors, and the parents of our grandchildren.

Upon reading this book you may have to work on your own life in order to provide the examples your child needs from you. Your children were created by God and given to you. They need your guidance, and guidance is best provided by showing them more than just telling them. Your children look up to you. They will imitate you and follow in your footsteps. This book is not about becoming a perfect parent, but a better parent by becoming a better you.

It is my desire through this book to provide you with solutions, tools and information that will help to better equip you to guide your child to live the life they were created to live. The information shared in this book is not the latest psychology, medical advances or fads in dealing with difficult children. The goal of this book

is to provide practical, Biblical based principles that give you the keys to raising and equipping your children to flourish in our world today, and to effectively raise the NEXT GENERATION.

“Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one’s youth.” Psalms 127:3-4

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*“May the LORD make you increase,
both you and your children. May you
be blessed by the LORD, the Maker of
heaven and earth.” (Psalm 115:14-15)*

Parenting

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Generation

Chapter One

Raising Godly Children

- It's Your Job
- Love the Secret Key
- Five Principles

Speaking from experience as a pastor and father, I can tell you children grow up fast. As parents we have a very short time to sow into the lives of our children. It is imperative that

we seize our opportunity to establish them in the truth of God's Word.

The greatest God given responsibility a parent has is to raise their children. It is also the biggest challenge a parent will ever have. As parents we need to take the responsibility God has given us and train our children in the admonition of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4b) We cannot leave it to others to raise our children: the government, schools, church, babysitters, day-care centers, or friends or relatives. God did not call them to raise our children He gave this responsibility to fathers and mothers. We can enlist the help of others who have a Godly influence, but it is our responsibility to make sure they are raised to be **GODLY CHILDREN.**

Christian parenting based on love, just as Father God loved us, is above all else, the key to raising Godly children. In all that we share on parenting, it all needs to be with the motive of love. Remember, even if you make “mistakes,” love will make up for your lack of perfection. In the final analysis, love never fails.

There are **FIVE PRINCIPLES** you need to implement as a parent to raise children who love the Lord and fulfill God’s calling on their life. Over the next few pages I will be briefly sharing and explaining those principles along with how to apply them in your life. Raising the next generation to be Godly young men and women is an awesome responsibility, but you can do it.

Before I get started sharing these five important principles for parenting the next generation, there are a couple of important things I want you to realize and take note of:

First, I don't believe I have all the answers, nor do I feel I have all the expertise of parenting. In fact, I have made more than my share of mistakes as a parent, but my two children, by the grace of God, love the Lord, serve the Lord and are raising their children (my grandchildren) by establishing them in the Word of God. In fact they are doing a better job than we did. It is my prayer you can benefit from my experiences, including the mistakes, to help you better raise your children.

Second, I know there are those reading this that are trying to do their best as a single parent or as a grandparent that has had to step into

the role of parent. So, even though the things I am sharing are from the perspective of father and mother, you can still use the principles shared, and with God's grace they will help you in fulfilling the responsibility you have had to assume.

The foundation of each of the following principles is from the Word of God. The Word has a wealth of instruction, guidance and encouragement for parents. So, let's get started.

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“All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children.”

Isaiah 54:13



Chapter Two

Principle One

Train Your Children

- You're Being Watched
- Setting Proper Boundaries
- How to Discipline
- To Spank or Not Spank

Proverbs 22:6 says, “*Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.*” Notice the use of the word “train”. To train means, “To form by

instruction, discipline, or drill; To prepare for a test of skill.” Training a child is calculated instruction and discipline to form long-term character and wisdom in the fear of the Lord and knowledge of scripture to equip them to pass the test of life.

Parents are unable to fulfill this instruction unless they know HOW to train their child in the way they should go. When our children came into this world there was no MANUAL that came with them. However, we realized early that God did give us a user’s manual – it is called the **Bible**. The Bible is God’s Word, and it provides us with instruction for life, including parenting.

So, as parents you should equip yourselves with God’s Word so you can train your children in the ways of God. Parents who do not have a solid understanding of the Word of God

cannot teach their children from it. They will struggle in their efforts to raise Godly children. If you are a parent, make a commitment to study the Bible making it a part of your daily life. It will pay huge dividends in the days ahead.

3 Keys to Training Children

Training involves instruction, demonstration, correction, discipline and reproving. As fathers and mothers we are to train our children in “the way they should go”, not the way they want to go or the way of the world. “The way” is based on biblical values and character, teaching them to know the Lord and His voice. The following are three keys to training your children in the way to go:

The first key is “BE A MODEL”. Kids may or may not listen to your words, but they *always pay attention to your actions.* The best quality

of a role model that you can have is to walk your walk and talk your talk. The old adage that says “do as I say, and not as I do” lacks the power to produce positive results. Nothing can be stronger than the power of example. Children today, more than ever, learn by example, by watching your behavior. When you become a parent, you had better check your bad habits at the door! Anything less just doesn’t cut it. Part of training our children is accomplished *by modeling who we want our children to be.*

Rodney Atkins sings a great song titled, “Watching You”, it makes a powerful statement concerning this point. Here is a link to the song [CLICK HERE](#).

You're Being Watched

If you think you are not being watched, think again. The eyes of your little ones are constantly watching and emulating what they see. Consider the following poem by-
Mary Rita Schilke Korzan:

"When You Thought I Wasn't Looking"

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you hang up my first painting on the refrigerator, and I wanted to paint another one.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you feed a stray cat, and I thought it was good to be kind to animals.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you make my

favorite cake for me, and I knew
that little things are special things.

When you thought I wasn't
looking, I heard you say a prayer,
and I believed there is a God I
could always talk to.

When you thought I wasn't
looking, I felt you kiss me
goodnight, and I felt loved.

When you thought I wasn't
looking, I saw tears come from
your eyes, and I learned that
sometimes things hurt, but it's
alright to cry.

When you thought I wasn't
looking, I saw that you cared, and

I wanted to be everything that I could be.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I looked...and wanted to say thanks for all the things I saw when you thought I wasn't looking.

Being a good role model does not mean you have to be perfect, but it is important to quickly admit your mistakes, repent, and make the necessary adjustments. This can be an important lesson demonstrated before your children. Just know how important your actions are and the influence they have on your children. They are watching!

The second key is “SET BOUNDARIES”.
This includes teaching and instructing children

according to God's Word - faith, prayer, obedience, forgiveness, repentance, etc. Children need you to define their world for them. They need to know why "A" is okay but "B" is not. They are looking to you to set the rules, manners, codes of conduct and standards of behavior that are acceptable for them based on the values established from the Word of God.

Children need boundaries. Boundaries teach children proper behavior and give them a sense of security. As children grow older include them in the process of establishing their boundaries. As parents, you are the authority, but if they feel like they have some input, then they take ownership of the guidelines and expectations established as well as the potential consequences if they miss the mark. For example, when our kids became

teenagers we set down together to establish curfew and other expectations. They signed off on what the boundaries were and if they exceeded the boundary they immediately knew the consequences. I can tell you we had very few incidents. Our children knew what acceptable behavior was and what was not, even at a young age.

There was a time when my wife was shopping at a store with our son who was about five years old. There was another family shopping in the store at the same time when their son began throwing a fit, and the mother did not seem to be able to deal with the situation. Our son looked up at my wife and said, “You wouldn’t let me act like that would you?”. He knew what acceptable behavior was and what was not, even at the age of five. Your children need boundaries.

Guidelines to Setting Boundaries

The following are some helpful guidelines you can use as you establish boundaries for your children -

- Refer to the Word of God for the values and behavioral standards.
- Consider the age and developmental stage of your child.
- Make the rules you expect your children to follow clear and concise.
- Periodically reassess the boundaries you have set for your child and make adjustments as needed.

- Make sure your child understands your expectations and that there are direct consequences for violating the boundaries or limits.
- Enforce the boundaries you set.

The third key is to “CORRECT & DISCIPLINE”. In the 21st century, parents are faced with ridicule, criticism and even rebuke for disciplining their children. However, the Word tells us if a father and mother do not discipline their child, they do not love the child. Properly disciplining our children is an act of love. Our heavenly Father set the example, “My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him. For whom the

Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.” (Hebrews12:5-6).

Because of the tragic increase of child abuse in the world, there are many voices saying you can no longer discipline children. However, to avoid proper Godly discipline is “abusing” our children. Discipline is essential for training and educating our children in righteousness. If we discipline them, it is because we love them, as God loves us. If there were no punishment for disobedience, how many of you would remain obedient?

Discipline is part of what a parent does. Your children need you to be the parent, not their peer or pal. It is not your job to be a “buddy,” “playmate” or “friend.” There are others their age who are able to serve this purpose. Your responsibility is to be their mentor, and most importantly the authority

figure in their lives. *Fulfilling your role as parent however, does not exclude being a friend.* You don't have to be mean, distant or impersonal. You can be a person they confide in and ask questions as they would a friend, but your responsibility as a father and mother, particularly in the early years, is to hold your children accountable.

Your goal as a parent is not to make your children happy. Children need parents who will teach them proper behavior and right from wrong. By being a parent -- rather than a friend -- to your children, you give them the best chance of growing into adults who can make good choices for themselves and society. Instead of making your child your best friend, focus on supporting them and guiding them into a mature, responsible and self-confident adult who knows right from wrong and how

to be led by the spirit of God. Properly correcting and disciplining them is the foundation of achieving this critical task.

Remember, you are the adult. You are the one who provides stability and structure. “No” is good for children and parents need to say no. Our kids would try to make us feel guilty by saying, “everybody else is doing it” or “we are the only ones that never get to(fill in the blank)”. Children need guidance and boundaries and then they need to be held accountable to those boundaries.

Children are not born knowing how to behave. They make mistakes along the way. When a child’s behavior exceeds the established boundaries, correction and discipline is needed. **Discipline means to teach.** When we discipline our children, we are

teaching them how we want them to behave. The goal of discipline is correction. I encourage you to use the word correction rather than punishment. The Godly process of discipline and correction includes a degree of punishment in the form of consequences, but the goal again is to change their behavior and the direction they were headed.

Tips for Godly Discipline

The following are few tips to follow:

- Focus on how you want them to behave -- rather than just focusing on what you don't want them to do.
- Be consistent with discipline.

Lack of consistency is one of the biggest problems facing parents. We often fail, not because we do not know what to do, but because we are not diligent in

applying what we know or consistent in applying what we know. You need consistency between your words and your actions and consistency between parents.

- When children misbehave it's your opportunity to teach them how to behave well by:

- 1) explaining what they did wrong.

- 2) correcting the mistake and explaining what they should have done or how they should have responded.

- 3) administering the proper consequence:swats, timeout, privileges removed, etc.

4) reprove them, this means
allow them to try again and
prove they can do it.
Encourage them and reinforce
your love, trust and
confidence in them.

They may scream, cry and be mad at you for a short while, but over time they will respect and value you for what you are doing. As an adult, they will look back and know that you always did what was best for them in the long run, not what was best for you at the moment. Our kids (now adults) have come to us on several occasions thanking us for being strict and making them mind and behave when they were younger.

Mistakes to Avoid

There are a couple of mistakes we need to avoid as parents.

1) Don't discipline in anger. It is important that you are under control and not exasperating the situation by yelling and becoming angry and over emotional. Take a few minutes to collect yourself and then address the problem.

I remember our son, when he was about seven or eight, disobeyed our instructions by riding his bike several blocks from our home to a friend's house. He was told to stay in his yard. When he did not respond to our calls for him, we immediately began to look for him. As time passed we became more concerned and intensified our search by calling neighbors and family. Frantically we looked everywhere for him. Finally we found him. We were so relieved to have him and know he was ok, but after the euphoria of finding him passed, I

became furious that he had not followed our instructions and created such worry and concern for us and others. I began to discipline him while extremely angry and gave him swats, yelled at him, and sent him to his room. Well, immediately the Lord began to deal with me about how I had not handled the situation properly. I needed to go and apologize to my son for lashing out at him in anger instead of disciplining in the right spirit. I initially resisted the idea, arguing with the Lord, “No way am I going to apologize. He was wrong and needed strong discipline and correction.” However, the Lord continued to correct and discipline me for my mistake until I finally responded and went to my son and apologized, asking him for his forgiveness. There are two lessons here, first the importance of not disciplining our children in anger and secondly, if we miss it, admit it and ask them for their forgiveness.

Being a good parent does not mean being a perfect parent. We are going to make mistakes. Learn from them and use them as a teaching opportunity with your children. Keeping a humble and teachable spirit is an important part of our own development as a parent.

2) Don't be overly harsh. Discipline and consequences that far exceed the infraction can provoke your child and undermine the effectiveness of the needed correction. Fairness is an important element of discipline.

3) Don't have unrealistic expectations. Successful parents require high standards of conduct of their children. However, unrealistic expectations can cause a child to become frustrated. Some parents crush their children's self-esteem, talents, dreams and confidence by pressuring them to achieve beyond their

natural ability in academics, music or sports. Parents should encourage their children to do their best, but a child should never be punished or made to feel unloved because he or she is not strong enough, fast enough or smart enough.

Children should always feel that they have their parents' unconditional love.

Be sure that you balance your correction with abundant praise for what your child is doing correctly. We all respond far more positively to encouragement than criticism.

“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:4

God promises blessings for parents who properly train their children (Proverbs 10:1a; 23:24 & 25; 29:17; 31:28) but He also warns of

consequences for parents who don't (Proverbs 10:1b; 17:21; 29:15b).

Proper Use of the Rod of Correction

I want to address one more important aspect of discipline - **TO SPANK OR NOT SPANK?**

Most Americans over the last two hundred years have believed in the value of corporal punishment and have used a “switch,” yardstick, paddle, belt, or hand to spank their children. It has been a part of discipline not only in the home, but in our schools systems and other institutions as well. However, over the last forty years the question of “spanking” has become one of the most controversial subjects - even among Christian parents.

There have been organizations and groups actively working to ban corporal punishment and redefine child abuse to a point of creating such a negative stigma that many now fear using corporal punishment. Make no mistake, genuine child abuse is taking place every day in America. Some parents are burning, torturing, and even killing their children. This type of behavior is obviously without excuse and has legal consequences.

That being said, these extremes should not be used as an argument against the **legitimate** and proper use of discipline. The reaction to the gross physical and sexual abuse of our children has swung the pendulum too far the other way and has put us in the other ditch. We must not “throw out the baby with the bathwater.” Regardless of the passionate appeal and arguments of those who want to

ban corporal punishment, those of us who recognize the Bible as the inspired Word of God must remain committed to properly following biblical instruction regarding discipline so we can effectively raise Godly children.

So, what does the Bible say? Does it advocate or sanction the spanking of children? The following are a few key verses:

"He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly."
(Proverbs13:24)

"Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish them with the rod, they will not die. Punish them with the rod and save them from death."(Proverbs23:13-14)

NIV)

“Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of correction will drive it far from him.” (Proverbs 22:15)

“The rod and rebuke give wisdom, But a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.” (Proverbs 29:15)

The argument often given is that the “Rod” does not mean an actual physical rod, but rather it means to speak the Word to bring correction. Others interpret Solomon’s use of the term “rod” figuratively all to make a case that parents should not actually strike their children with a rod. However, when you read what is written, it is abundantly clear in Proverbs 23:13-13 the exact target and intent; *“punish him with the rod”* and *“punish*

him with the rod”, why - “to deliver his soul from hell.”

A proper balance is obviously needed between verbal correction and encouragement on the one hand, and the application of corporal punishment on the other, as seen in the following words:

“The rod and rebuke give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother. Correct your son, and he will give you rest; yes, he will give delight to your soul” Proverbs 29:15.

The importance and value of correcting your child with the Word of God in conjunction with appropriately administering the rod of correction, cannot be overstated.

Tips on Using the Rod of Correction

Seven tips to help you appropriately administering the rod of correction:

1. Use the word correction rather than punishment. The goal of discipline is to bring correction so as to change the behavior.
2. Use a paddle or similar item, not your hand. Your hand should be used and seen by your child for a hug, to hold, or pat on the back. You never want your child to flinch or be afraid when you approach them with your hand.
3. Discipline Immediately. The delay between discipline and

the misbehavior should be short.

4. Administer discipline in privacy.

5. Administer the rod of correction to the bottom of the child. Never strike or whip the body or face of your child.

6. Always explain why they are being disciplined and what you are going to do, e.g. - “I am giving you 3 swats for not obeying...”

7. Discipline with the right spirit - never in anger or rage. Hug your child after discipline and reassure them of your love.

Using the rod for correction along with sowing the Word of God in your child's heart

is part of the Biblical process to effectively train Godly children. However, before using the rod of correction to discipline your child you must fully understand what is appropriate and what is not. If you discipline with hostility, anger, frustration or even hatred you will sow seeds of resentment and rebellion in their hearts.

In closing on this subject there are a couple of points I need to emphasize. First, I want to make perfectly clear there is nothing in God's word about discipline that makes any allowance for child abuse. Jesus protected and loved the little children and we should too. Anyone who physically abuses a child deserves to receive whatever the full extent of the law can impose upon them. To harm or injure a child for any reason is without excuse.

Second, using the rod of correction for discipline can be misused in many ways. Love must be the motivation in dealing with any child. Using the rod of correction can be too harsh, too inconsistent, too late, too hasty and too much. The fact that you apply the rod of correction to your children does not make you a godly or righteous parent. You must use God's wisdom and implement the discipline as intended for correction and the good of the child.

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Chapter Three

Principle Two

Protect Your

Children

- **Guarding Against Dangers**
- **Five Major Areas of Influence**
- **Being Led by the Spirit**

Parents have a responsibility to protect their children from potential dangers emotionally, physically and spiritually. This

requires maintaining age appropriate boundaries (part of principle one) and teaching your children practical safeguards. For example:

Young children should know their full name, home phone number and how to use the telephone. They should know where posted contact information is located such as: work phone, cell phone, trusted neighbor or relative, other important numbers, 911, etc.

They should be taught how to deal with strangers like not opening the front door or responding to people in cars . They should know what to do in case of an emergency e.g. fire in the house, getting lost, etc. There are many practical things a parent should be sharing with their younger children. As a parent

you are the best one to teach them about safety and potential dangers.

As your children move into the teen years the safety issues change and expand. Teenagers should know not to go out alone. There is safety in numbers. They should always let you know where they are going and who they will be with. One of the most important things you can do as a parent is to create an environment for open communication by developing confidence and trust with your teenager.

Obviously there are many other practical safety tips you can equip your children with. Beyond establishing the appropriate boundaries and instituting practical safeguards there are five major influences in a child's life that you need to be providing oversight and guidance in; 1) family, 2) friends, 3) media, 4)

school, 5) church. As a parent you need to monitor all five of these areas. The older your children are, the more critical it is that you are aware of who and what is influencing their life. Let's take a quick look at each of these major areas of influence:

5 Major Areas That Influence Your Child

1) Family

Obviously you have the greatest ability to monitor what is happening in the family. Make sure to create a positive, nurturing and Godly family influence. The family should be a safe haven for children. If there are undesirable situations in the home, they need to be addressed. Get help if needed.

2) Friends

Do you know who your children's friends are? What do you know about those friends?

Your children's friends will influence them; their attitude, the way they behave, the things they say, what they believe and the places they go. It is important for you to protect your children from friends that have a negative influence on them. You have a right and an obligation to limit the exposure of your children to influences that are contrary to your core beliefs and values.

3) **Media**

Today, more than ever, media and technology are a major part of a young person's life - movies, television, music, social media, videos , etc. You may even feel somewhat overwhelmed by the ever-changing, ever-growing worlds of technology and media with smart phones, video game consoles as powerful as yesterday's home computers, ipads, the internet, etc. With all of this increased exposure to media, it is important for parents

to stay informed and involved to make sure that your child is only being exposed to appropriate content. Make sure you have safeguards in place and limit the time they spend on the various media they have use of. While it is important to trust your children, you should also verify your trust by monitoring your children's internet and cell phone use. Every once in a while, check the file history in their browser to see which sites they have been visiting and read the text messages they are sending and receiving on their cell phones.

4) **School**

Your children are in school approximately seven hours a day Monday through Friday. Teachers, classmates and the school

environment have a huge impact on the life of your children. Not only are they being taught the academic subjects, but they are also being influenced socially and ideologically. Make sure you stay involved in the life of your child. Be listening to and checking on what they are learning and the activities they are participating in. You need to help bring balance to things they are learning that may contradict the values and beliefs you have been teaching.

5) Church

Being part of a church community should be an integral part of your family and can have a major impact on the spiritual growth of your children, but you cannot expect the church to be able to overcome all of the other influences in their life if they are counter to the values and beliefs they are receiving at church.

When you compare the amount of time children are in church to that of being at school, hanging out with friends, watching TV and other media, there is just no comparison. That is why it is important to monitor the other four areas of influence to limit negative exposure where possible and bring balance and correction to the things that are contrary to what you want your children to learn. Make church involvement a priority, but make sure you stay involved in all areas of your children's lives.

With our own children, I remember how important it was for us to have our family attend a church and to be involved in the children's ministry. We wanted our children to understand and embrace the Christian faith in a deeper and more tangible way. My wife and I even began volunteering as teachers and

leaders in the children and youth ministries. I encourage you to get involved in the other areas as well. My wife helped with girl scouts, band, and other areas our daughter was involved in. I helped coach several sports teams. It was the best investment we could have made.

Teaching and equipping your children to know the Word of God and how to be led by the Spirit should be a guiding priority. We wanted our children to be able to align their choices and decisions with a biblical world view. Often those quality choices will run counter to the culture we live in. We need to understand how difficult that can be. Even well-meaning and well equipped believers have difficulty going against the consensus (crowd). As a parent we need to be there to help support and guide our children.

His Word offers guidance as to how we should monitor what influences our children (Proverbs 4:23, Colossians 2:8, Psalm 101:3, Romans 8:5-12).

“Each day of our lives we make deposits in the memory banks of our children.” ~

Charles (Chuck) Swindoll

Chapter Four

Principle Three

Bless Your Children

- Ways to Bless Your Children
- Speak the Word Over Your Children
- Scriptures to Use

Parents are to bless their children. It is part of the calling and responsibility we have as fathers and mothers. There are several ways we can bless our children;

- BY VALUING THEM.

- BY DEVELOPING FAITH IN THEM
- BY AFFIRMING THEM.
- BY HELPING THEM GROW SPIRITUALLY.
- BY HELPING THEM DISCOVER GOD’S PURPOSE FOR THEIR LIFE.
- BY SPEAKING BLESSING OVER THEIR LIFE

The last way of blessing your children, is the one I want to expand on.

Speaking the Word to Bless

Very few parents take advantage of this extremely powerful way to bless their children. Your words have power. “Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love

it will eat its fruit.” (Proverbs 18:21) When you speak God’s blessing over your children you release the power of God into their life.

No matter what age your children are, you can speak God’s blessing over them. Make it appropriate for where your children are in their life.

Blessing is a custom established by God and meant to function in every family on earth. Abraham spoke his blessing to his son Isaac. Isaac spoke a blessing to his son Jacob. Jacob gave a verbal blessing to each of his twelve sons and to two of his grandchildren. When God blessed us with the gift of his Son, it was his *Word* that "became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). God has always been a God of words. Speaking forth the blessing over your children is God’s way of imparting deep into the heart of a person His image (thoughts,

feelings, and experience), identity (*Who am I?*) and destiny (*Why am I here?*). This is of critical importance, because vision for life, physical and emotional health, financial prosperity, and family relational dynamics are all directly linked to images of God, self, and others imprinted in the inner man (heart) of every person. “*As a man thinks in his heart, so is he*” (Proverbs 23:7).

You can begin by speaking words of affection to your children. In fact, you should never stop telling your children that you love them!

You can speak words of mercy and grace over them, teaching them the power of forgiveness.

Speak words of affirmation. Children desire your acceptance and reinforcement of

their value. Each child is unique, and their need for affirmation will vary. They need to know God has called them and has a plan for their life and that you see God's hand upon them. As your child grows, you will need to adjust how you speak the blessing over them. Part of showing children your approval and their value is figuring out how to affirm them in a way they can understand. We can help our children understand their place in God's Kingdom when we say, "You are a promise from God. You have amazing potential! You are God's gift! And God is going to use you in an incredible way."

Then begin speaking God's promises into their lives. If you're not sure exactly how to go about doing it, simply begin speaking the following scriptures over your children. Start by using this text from — Numbers 6:24-26:

“May the Lord bless
you and keep you. May the
Lord make His face shine on
you and be gracious to you.
May the Lord look upon you
with favor and give you
peace.”

Promises You Can Speak

Continue with any of the following:

Salvation - Lord, let salvation spring
up within my children, that they may
obtain the salvation that is in Christ
Jesus, with eternal glory.

(Isaiah 45:8, 2 Timothy 2:10)

Growing in Grace -I pray that they
may “grow in the grace and

knowledge of our Lord and Savior
Jesus Christ.” (2 Peter 3:18)

Walking in Love - Grant, Lord, that
my children may learn to live a life of
love through the Spirit who dwells in
them. (Ephesians 5:2, Galatians 5:22)

Honesty and Integrity - May integrity
and honesty be their virtue and their
protection. (Psalm 25:21)

Having Self-Control - Father, help my
children not to be like many others
around them, but let them be “alert
and self-controlled” in all they do. (1
Thessalonians 5:6)

A Love for God’s Word - May my
children grow to find Your Word
“more precious than gold, than much
pure gold; [and] sweeter than honey,
than honey from the comb.” (Psalm
19:10)

Justice - God, help my children to love justice as You do and to “act justly” in all they do. (Psalm 11:7, Micah 6:8)

Mercy - May my children always “be merciful, as [their] Father is merciful.” (Luke 6:36)

Respect (for self, others, and authority) - Father, grant that my children may “show proper respect to everyone,” as Your Word commands. (1 Peter 2:17)

Strong, Biblical Self-Esteem - Help my children to develop a strong sense of self-esteem that is rooted in the realization that they are “God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus.” (Ephesians 2:10)

Faithfulness - “Let love and faithfulness never leave [my children],” but bind these twin virtues around their necks and write them on the tablet of their hearts. (Proverbs 3:3)

A Passion for God - Lord, please instill in my children a soul with a craving for You, a heart that clings passionately to You. (Psalm 63:8)

Hope - May the God of hope grant that my children may overflow with hope and hopefulness by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13)

Responsibility - Grant that my children may learn responsibility, “for each one should carry his own load.” (Galatians 6:5)

Generosity - Grant that my children may “be generous and willing to share

[and so] lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age.” (1 Timothy 6:18-19)

Peace - Father, let my children “make every effort to do what leads to peace.” (Romans 14:19)

Humility - Lord, please cultivate in my children the ability to show true humility toward all. (Titus 3:2)

Compassion - Lord, please clothe my children with the virtue of compassion. (Colossians 3:12)

Perseverance - Lord, teach my children perseverance in all they do, and help them especially to “run with perseverance the race marked out for [them].” (Hebrews 12:1)

Prayerfulness - Grant, Lord, that my children’s lives may be marked by

prayerfulness, that they may learn to “pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.” (Ephesians 6:18)

Contentment - Father, teach my children “the secret of being content in any and every situation through Him who gives [them] strength.” (Philippians 4:12-13)

Faith - I pray that faith will find root and grow in my children’s hearts, that by faith they may gain what has been promised to them. (Luke 17:5-6, Hebrews 11:1-40)

Joy - May my children be filled “with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.” (1 Thessalonians 1:6)

Vision for the Nations - Lord, please help my children to develop a

heart for missions, a desire to see Your glory declared among the nations, Your marvelous deeds among all peoples. (Psalm 96:3)

A Servant Heart - Lord, please help my children develop servant hearts, that they may “serve wholeheartedly as if [they] were serving the Lord, not men.” (Ephesians 6:7)

A Willingness and Ability to Work Hard - Teach my children, Lord, to value work and to work hard at everything they do, “as working for the Lord, not for men.” (Colossians 3:23)

Purity - “Create in [them] a pure heart, O God,” and let their purity of

heart be shown in their actions. (Psalm 51:10)

Kindness - Lord, may my children “always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else.”

(1 Thessalonians 5:15)

Courage - May my children always “be strong and courageous” in their character and in their actions. (Deuteronomy 31:6)

Self-Discipline - Father, I pray that my children may develop self-discipline, that they may acquire “a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair.”(Proverbs 1:3)

Here is an assignment to help you get started:

•Each day this week pray God's blessing over each one of your children and grand- children. Speak the blessing out, be loud and clear...do not mumble...say it as though you expect God to release his favor upon your children and grand-children.

•AT LEAST one day this week (more is better) CALL THEM up, and over the phone or if possible in person do it in person, ask for God's blessing over them.

“The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” James 5:16

“Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving”

Colossians 4:2



"Never underestimate the power of prayer and the power of God to help raise Godly children."

Chapter Five

Principle Four

Pray for Your Children

- Ways to Pray for Your Children
- What to Pray for
- List of Scriptures to Pray

Parents are called to pray for their children and to pray with their children. Releasing the Word of God into the lives of your children by prayer is powerful. No matter how hard you may work to help your kids experience God's best for them, there are limits to what you can do, but prayer has no limits. Prayer goes where you can't go – making it the most effective resource you have as parents.

Make prayer for your children a part of your daily prayer time. My wife and I still pray for our children nearly every morning during our prayer time, even though they are out of the house and have their own families. We pray the blessing of God over them and His divine

protection, and of course we include the grandchildren in that prayer. There is power in prayer.

You Have Authority

As a parent you have the authority to go to the Father on behalf of your children and intercede for them. You can declare God's Word over their lives. It is important to realize God has already provided His blessing for them. You do not have to beg God or convince God to bless your children. You are simply speaking God's Word and setting yourself in agreement for His blessing in their lives. You are reminding God of something that is already His will and that He has already provided for them. When you pray, you are declaring what God has already done.

There are many ways you can pray for your children. Here is a sample prayer we pray over our son, who is married and has four children, that may help you get started;

“Father God, I thank You for blessing our son, Ryan and his family. We thank you for opening the widows of heaven over his life. Thank you for helping him grow and to hear your voice. Thank you for your favor upon him and blessing all he puts his hand to. Help him to be everything you created him to be. Thank you for keeping him and protecting him and his family from the temptations of the world, any deception of the enemy, any infliction or infirmity that would otherwise try to attack them. We ask that You give Him Your wisdom and peace today as you direct Him, in the name of your son Jesus. Amen!”

Thing You Can Pray For

There are several things you can include in your prayers for your children. Here are just a few:

- Salvation - if your children are not born again you can pray for their salvation. Acts 16:31 says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved--you and your household." Pray for laborers to cross their path (Mt. 9:38) and for their spiritual eyes be open.
- Discernment - is the ability to decide between truth and error, to know right from wrong, and the difference between good and evil.
- Wisdom - Pray that your child will have godly—not worldly—wisdom. James 1:5 promises, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and

without reproach, and it will be given to him." Ask for your children to receive that liberal application of godly wisdom.

- Direction - pray their steps ordered of the Lord (Psalms 37:23) and that they are led by the Spirit. (Romans 8:14)
- Favor - Pray for them to have favor with God and man. (Proverbs 3:4) There's nothing wrong with praying that your children will have favor with teachers, school administrators, coaches, and eventually employers—as well as with classmates, teammates, and coworkers—and that they'll be liked and appreciated for who they are.
- Protection - Pray for their protection in all things and

everywhere they go. (Psalm 121:8) Pray that they would not enter into temptation. (Luke 22:40) Pray for the angels to guard them (Psalms 91)

- Faith - Pray they are strong in their faith and live by faith.

Scriptures You Can Pray

The following is a list of other scriptures you can pray over your children:

Acts 19:20 - I thank you Father that Your Word prevails over our children.

Isa. 54:13 - That they are taught of the Lord and continue to be in peace.

Prov 13:1 - the fruit of godly instruction and correction.

Isa 54:13.....Great is their peace and undisturbed composure.

Prov 2:6 - Father, give us counsel and wisdom in bringing up our children.

1Pet 1:14 - I say they are obedient, not conforming to the things of the flesh,

1Pet 1:15 - but holy, in all conduct.

1Pet 2:2 -. desiring the pure milk of the Word that they may grow thereby.

Jas 1:19 - That they are swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath.

Heb 13:5 - Their conduct is without covetousness,

Heb 13:5 - and they are content with what they have.

Heb 13:16 - They do not forget to do what is right and to share.

2Pet 3:18 - I pray that they grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord,

1Thes 4:1 -. and abound more and more in how they should walk and please you.

1Pet 5:5 - That they submit to their

elders, and to one another,

1Pet 5:5 - being clothed with humility.

1Pet 5:7 -. That they cast their cares upon
You, Father, for You care for them.

Jas 1:22 - I thank You that they are doers
of the Word, and not hearers only,

Philemon 1:6 -.effectively sharing their
faith.

2Tim 1:7 - not having a spirit of fear, but
of power, love, and a sound mind.

2Tim 1:9 - Father, You have saved them
and called them with a holy calling,

2Tim 1:9 -.not according to works, but
according to Your own purpose.

2Tim 4:18 -Deliver them from every evil
work and preserve them.

John 10:5 - They will by no means follow
strangers, not knowing their voices.

2Tim2:22 - They abide with others who
call on the Lord out of a pure heart,

James 3:10and cursing comes not out of their mouth.

1Jn 5:18 - Because Jesus keeps them safe, the wicked one does not touch them.

Ps. 91:11- Give Your angels special charge to accompany, defend, preserve

Ps. 4:8 - and provide safety for them, day and night.

1Jn 2:5 - Because they keep Your Word, Your love is being perfected in them.

1Jn 2:15 - They do not love the world or the things in the world,

3Jn 1:11 - and they do not imitate what is evil, but what is good.

1Jn 1:7 - They walk in the light as You are in the Light,

Jas 4:8 - cleansing their hands and purifying their hearts,

2Tim 2:22 - They follow after righteousness, faith, love, and peace.

Heb 13:18 - They have a good conscience
and desire to live honorably,

Prov 3:4 - having favor and high esteem
with God and man.

Guidelines Praying With Your Children

Also, pray with your children. Praying with your child is one of the greatest opportunities you have to impact their lives. Both of our children are grown but some of my favorite and most valuable memories are from our family prayer and devotion times. The following are some guidelines to help you with a time of devotion and prayer with your children:

1. Set Aside a Regular Time. When our kids were younger we use to have our time in the evening, but as they grew older and their schedules became busy with practice, home

work, and other commitments, we moved it to the morning. There were times we had to get up at 5:00 am in order to have enough time before we had to leave to get kids to school, practice, and work. The important thing is to set a regular time that works for your family and be committed to it. It does not have to be long, in fact it is better to make it a time frame that you can stay committed to.

2. Involve the Children. Make sure how you pray and what is being shared is age appropriate. Encourage your children to participate. Ask them to pray. Let them read or ask them to act out the story just read. Make it fun. Ask questions. Let them ask questions. Try to apply what is being prayed or shared to their lives.

3. Change It Up. Family prayer time should be something everyone looks forward to. That means becoming creative in how the time is spent. There are different devotional materials available that can help give you ideas. Don't get stuck in a routine that becomes boring.

4. Teach Them the Word. Whatever format or style of devotion and prayer time you adopt, always make sure it is Word focused. There are two main goals of praying with your children; 1) Spending time together - "a family that prays together stays together". 2) Teaching the Word. So - keep the focus on the Word.

"The family should be a closely knit group. The home should be a self-contained shelter of security;

*a kind of school where life's basic lessons are taught;
and a kind of church where God is honored; a place
where wholesome recreation and simple pleasures
are enjoyed.”~ Billy Graham*



Chapter Six

Principle Five

Love Your Children

- Setting Priorities
- Five Ways to Show Your Love

You would think loving your children would go without saying, but many parents struggle with effectively loving their children.

Children need a parent's love more than they need things or practically anything else a parent can do. So, how do you love your children? Here are five practical ways to show your love:

1. **Time**. Some people think you spell love M-O-N-E-Y, but for most kids love is spelled T-I-M-E. Probably the one thing that will demonstrate your love for your children the most is when you make them and their lives a priority. Our children knew mom and dad were going to be at their school events and the activities they were involved in. If they called or came to my office they knew and my secretary knew they were allowed to talk to me or see me regardless of anything else I might be doing. As a family we spent time together each day and set time aside for family nights and outings. The time spent with your children is an investment that will produce incredible

returns. **Make your family a priority.** Our lives are busy, and it is easy to push the needs of our children aside. I know of several situations where children have grown up feeling neglected because their parent's career or other interests came ahead of them. Keeping your priorities right takes effort and ongoing attention. The following is a guide to set your priorities;

- 1) God
- 2) Your Spouse
- 3) Your Children
- 4) Your Career

There are a lot of things in life that scream for our time. Many of them may seem urgent but, are they really important? I want to invest my time in things that bring the greatest return and/or the greatest reward. I have never regretted one minute spent with my children. It is the investment that has produced the

greatest return. Your children are worth giving your time. When you give them time you are saying “I LOVE YOU”.

2. **Tell Them**. Not only is spending time with our children critical to showing our love for them, but we also need to tell them we love them. We need to say it over and over again. I know there are a lot of different ways to show your love, but don't forget to say it. Men sometimes find it difficult to say, “I love you son or daughter.” Men will tell me they work hard to provide their family a good life - home, food, clothes, etc. They think that should speak their love, but it is important to vocalize it. Tell your children that you love them.

3. **Listen**. One of the most valuable gifts you can give your child is to listen to them - to the little things as well as the big things in their life. When you listen to your children you are saying I am interested in you. Listening

carefully is how you gather information about what's going on in your child's life and what they are thinking. Listening builds stronger relationships, it shows respect for them, it is always the first step in solving problems, and it will help you better understand what your child needs. Kids are smarter than most grown-ups think, and they generally know what they need, so listen up. If you want your child to listen to you, you'll need to first listen to them. When you listen to them you are saying "I love you".

4. **Praise**. Parents need to regularly praise their children. Look for opportunities to show your approval and to encourage them when they have done something right or well. Father God demonstrated this to us in Matthew 3:17, "This is my son whom I love and am well pleased." It is important to give genuine compliments about their accomplishments. They need specific comments on what they are

doing well: be it their school work, sports, music, playing or chores. Get detailed in your praise. Praise your children. It says I love you.

5. **Discipline**. We already covered the importance of discipline and correction, but it is also an important way of demonstrating your love. It is not love to not to discipline your child to be responsible for their own actions and accept the consequences of those actions. When you correct and discipline your child you are showing true love. Hebrews 12:6-11 explains it this way, "... the Lord disciplines the one he loves, ... For what children are not disciplined by their father? If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline, then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. ... They disciplined us

for a little while as they thought best; ... No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.” Even though disciplining is painful, for both the child and the parent, it is a demonstration of love when done correctly.

The God kind of love is defined in I Corinthians 13:4-8 and Philipians 2:1-4 as being patient, kind, not easily provoked, merciful, and humble. As Christian parents we endeavor to do all of these. However, these attributes in no way nullify the equally important attributes of righteousness and justice. As parents we demonstrate our love when we combine the righteousness of setting legitimate standards for our children with the justice of fairly punishing for disobedience. We

are helping our children to learn right from wrong as well as to develop self-control over their self-centered nature.

So, make sure *love* dominates the relationship with your children. This is what they need most of all. They don't need more things. They don't need more activities or opportunities. They need you!

Our lives are busy, and it is easy to push the needs of our children aside. I have witnessed many situations where children, sometimes even in ministry families, have grown up feeling neglected. Work and/or ministry matters came ahead of them, and ultimately it caused resentment in their life. It goes without saying that something like this should never happen. I have vigorously fought against this, and have tried to make the spiritual environment of my home the priority in my life, regardless of what

my main profession in life has been. Psalm 127:3 says, “Behold, children are a gift of the Lord, The fruit of the womb is a reward.” Make your family a priority by “loving them”.

Quotes of Encouragement

Affirming words from moms and dads are like light switches. Speak a word of affirmation at the right moment in a child's life and it's like lighting up a

whole roomful of possibilities.

-- Gary Smalley

*Always kiss your children goodnight - even if
they're already asleep.*

-- H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

*Love is the chain whereby to bind a child to its
parents.*

-- Abraham Lincoln

Closing

As parents and believers, we have an awesome responsibility. We are raising the next

generation. Our children and the children in our churches are the next generation's leaders, pastors, teachers and parents. We must raise them right. We need to train them to follow God—to honor and obey Him without complaining or hesitating.

Let's not leave our children ill-equipped to handle their calling. Let's teach them what it is to honor us, and that by honoring us they honor Him. Children need to honor God and to know how much He loves them. They learn that, to a great degree, through you, their parents. And remember, our children are our future! As parents we all want the best for our children, and the best we can ever give them would have to be teaching them God's way. I pray for God to give you wisdom, strength, and patience as you train them up and raise Godly children.

Prayer

Father, I now understand that to be a Godly parent and raise my children in the admonition of the Lord, I must be born again and become part of Your family. I want to be part of Your family, not just as a Godly parent, but I want to know You, Lord.

Therefore, I acknowledge Jesus as Your Son, and I believe He was crucified, buried, resurrected, and then ascended to Your right hand to provide a way for me to be born again.

I renounce every work of darkness, I surrender to You, Jesus, and I ask You now to become my personal Savior and Lord.

Thank You, Lord Jesus, for empowering me with Your Holy Spirit to become a strong witness of You in my area of

influence. Thank You for helping me to be a Godly parent for my children and for giving me your help to serve you in every area of my life, so Your life, the God-kind of life – will be demonstrated through me on a consistent basis.

Thank You, Jesus, that today I have new life in You!

Signature

Date

If you just prayed that prayer I want to give you the book, “What’s Next”. It will

give you some practical steps to take to grow as a person and as a parent. You can go to - <http://www.breakthroughforyou.com> to download the book for free. It is located half way down the page on the right side bar. Be blessed!