

PARENTING CHECK LIST

1. Have we been involved in an unbiblical practice?
2. Are we failing to consider our children as a high priority in our lives?
3. Do we spend more time involved in other activities – work, social events – than we do with our family?
4. Is most of our communication with our children negative – injunctions shouted out quickly, in the midst of a busy pace that never stops?
5. Have we resorted to using spanking or physical punishment as an answer to every problem, rather than spending time teaching our children in a positive manner why they should follow Christian beliefs and practice?
6. Have we created unrealistic rules? Too early curfews? Too many dating restrictions?
7. Have we been too lax, which indicates to our children that we don't care how they act?
8. Is there any plan or strategy to our parenting, or is it made up of unconsidered responses to whatever crisis arises?
9. When we are wrong, do we admit this to our children?
10. Do we have a fear – loss of a job, loss of a mate from divorce or death – which we hide even from ourselves, which keeps us from assuming parental responsibilities that would help to stop the prodigal process?

HOW TO RAISE A CHILD FOR GOD

STUDY THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES AND CIRCLE THE ONES WHERE YOU ARE FAILING:

1. Examine your expectations for your child. Are they realistic? Evaluate them in the light of the Bible.

1 Cor. 13:11: “When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

Matt. 18:10: “Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven.”

Gen. 33:12-14: “Then Esau said, ‘Let us take our journey; let us go, and I will go before you.’ But Jacob said to him, ‘My lord knows that the children *are* weak, and the flocks and herds which are nursing *are* with me. And if the men should drive them hard one day, all the flock will die. Please let my lord go on ahead before his servant. I will lead on slowly at a pace which the livestock that go before me, and the children, are able to endure, until I come to my lord in Sēir.’”

2. Love him unconditionally.

Deut. 7:7: “The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples.”

1 John 4:10, 19: Jesus answered and said to her, :If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.’” . . . The woman said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.”

3. Look for opportunities in which you commend him. Express appreciation for him frequently.

Phil. 1:3: “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.”

1 Thess. 1:2: “We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers.”

2 Thess. 1:3: “We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other.”

4. Seldom criticize without first expressing appreciation for good points.

1 Cor. 1:3-13: “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, that you were enriched in every thing by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you, but *that* you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it has been declared to me

concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chlōē's household, that there are contentions among you. Now I say this, that each of you says, 'I am of Paul,' or 'I am of Apollos,' or 'I am of Cēphas,' or 'I am of Christ.' Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?"

5. Give him freedom to make decisions where serious issues are not at stake. Your goal should be to bring your child to maturity in Christ and not to dependence on you.

Eph. 4:13-15; 6:4: "Till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ." . . . "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord."

Prov. 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

Col. 1:27-28: "To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

6. Do not compare him with others.

Gal. 6:4: "But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another."

2 Cor. 10:12-13: "For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. We, however, will not boast beyond measure, but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed us - a sphere which especially includes you."

1 Cor. 12:4-11: "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of

spirits, to another *different* kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

7. Never mock him or make fun of him. Do not demean or belittle your child. Beware of calling him dumb or clumsy or stupid.

Matt. 7:12: “Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”

Eph. 4:29-30: “Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”

Col. 4:6: “Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.”

Prov. 12:18; 16:24: “There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, but the tongue of the wise promotes health.” . . . “Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the bones.”

8. Do not scold him in front of others.

Matt. 16:22-23; 18:15: “Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, ‘Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!’ But He turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.’” . . . “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.”

1 Cor. 16:14: “Let all that you do be done with love.”

9. Never make threats or promises that you do not intend to keep.

Matt. 5:37: “But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.”

James 5:12: “But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No,’ lest you fall into judgment.”

Col. 3:9: “Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds.”

10. Don’t be afraid to say “no,” and when you say it, mean it.

Prov. 22:15; 29:15: “Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of correction will drive it far from him.” . . . “The rod and rebuke give wisdom, but a child *left to himself* brings shame to his mother.”

1 Sam. 3:13: “For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knows, because his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them.”

Gen. 18:19: “For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him.”

11. When your child has problems or is a problem, do not over-react or lose control of yourself. Do not yell or shout or scream at him.

Eph. 4:26-27: “‘Be angry, and do not sin’: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, no give place to the devil.”

1 Cor. 16:14: “Let all that you do be done with love.”

2 Tim. 2:24-25: “And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth.”

1 Tim. 5:1-2: “Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity.”

12. Communicate optimism and expectancy. Do not communicate by word or action that you have given up on your child and are resigned to his being a failure.

Philem. 21: “Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.”

2 Cor. 9:1-2: “Now concerning the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you; for I know your willingness, about which I boast of you to the Macedonians, that Achāia was ready a year ago; and your zeal has stirred up the majority.”

1 Cor. 13:7: “bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”

13. Make sure your child knows exactly what is expected of him. Most of the book of Proverbs is specific counsel from a father to his son.
14. Ask his advice - include him in some of the family planning.

Rom. 1:11-12: “For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established – that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.”

2 Tim. 4:11: “Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry.”

1 Tim. 4:12: “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”

John 6:5: “Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, ‘Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?’”

15. When you make a mistake with your child, admit it and ask your child for forgiveness.

Matt. 5:23-24: “Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”

James 5:16: “Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”

16. HAVE FAMILY CONFERENCES WHERE YOU DISCUSS:

- a. Family goals
- b. Family projects
- c. Vacations
- d. Devotions
- e. Chores
- f. Discipline
- g. Complaints
- h. Suggestions
- i. Problems

(1) Welcome contributions from your child.

Ps. 128: “Blessed is every one who fears the Lord, who walks in His ways. When you eat the labor of your hands, you shall be happy, and it shall be well with you. Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the very heart of your house. Your children like olive plants all around your table. Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the Lord. The Lord bless you out of Zion, and may you see the good of Jerusalem all the days of your life. Yes, may you see your children’s children. Peace be upon Israel!

James 1:19; 3:13-18: “So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;” . . . “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.”

Titus 1:6-8: “if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled.”

Prov. 15:22: “Without counsel, plans go away, but in the multitude of counselors they are established.”

17. Assess his areas of strength and then encourage him to develop them. Begin with one and encourage him to really develop in this area.

2 Tim. 1:16; 4:5: “The Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain.” . . . “But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”

1 Pet. 4:10: “As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

18. Give him plenty of tender loving care. Be free in your expression of love by word and deed.

1 Cor. 13:1-8; 16:14: “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.” . . . “Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.”

John 13:34: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.”

1 Thess. 2:7-8: “But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.”

19. Practice selective reinforcement. When your child does something well, commend him. Especially let him know when his attitude and effort are what they should be.

1 Thess. 1:3-10: “remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father, knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God. For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became examples to all in Macedōnia and Achāia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything. For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

Phil. 1:3-5: “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now.”

Col. 1:3-4: “We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints.”

Eph. 1:15: “Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints.”

20. Be more concerned about Christian attitudes and character than you are about performance or athletic skills or clothing or external beauty or intelligence.

1 Sam. 16:7: “But the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.’”

Gal. 5:22-23: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.”

1 Pet. 3:4-5: “rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands.”

Prov. 4:23: “Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.”

Matt. 23:25-28: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.”

21. Have a lot of fun with your child. Plan to have many fun times and many special events with your child. Make a list of fun things your family can do.

Ps. 128: “Blessed is every one who fears the Lord, who walks in His ways. When you eat the labor of your hands, you shall be happy, and it shall be well with you. Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the very heart of your house. Your children like olive plants all around your table. Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the Lord. The Lord bless you out of Zion, and may you see the good of Jerusalem all

the days of your life. Yes, may you see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel!

Prov. 4:15-18; 15:13; 17:22: "Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn away from it and pass on. For they do not sleep unless they have done evil; and their sleep is taken away unless they make someone fall. For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence. But the path of the just is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day."

Eph. 6:4: "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord."

Col. 3:21: "Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged."

Eccl. 3:4: "A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance."

Luke 15:22-24: "But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry."

22. Help your child to learn responsibility by administering discipline fairly, consistently, lovingly, and promptly.

1 Sam. 3:13: "For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knows, because his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them."

Prov. 13:24; 19:18; 22:15: "He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly." . . . "Chasten your son while there is hope, and do not set your heart on his destruction." . . . "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of correction will drive it far from him."

23. Look upon your child as a human becoming as well as a human being. Look upon the task of raising children as a process which takes eighteen to nineteen years to complete.

Eph. 6:4: "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord."

Prov. 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

Gal. 6:9: “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”

1 Cor. 15:58: “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

Isa. 28:9-10: “Whom will he teach knowledge? And whom will he make to understand the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just drawn from the breasts? For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little.”

24. Live your convictions consistently. Your child will learn more by observing your example than he will by listening to your words.

Deut. 6:4-9: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart; you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

1 Thess. 2:10-12: “You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.”

Phil. 4:9: “The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.”

1 Tim. 1:5, 7: “Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith.” . . . “desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.”

25. Recognize that you are responsible to prepare your child for life in this world and the world to come.

Eph. 6:4: “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”

Deut. 6:4-9: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart; you shall teach them diligently to your children,

and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

Ps. 78:5-7: “For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, the children who would be born, that they may arise and declare them to their children, that they may set their hopes in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments.”

2 Tim. 3:15-17: “and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

26. Be very sensitive to the needs, feelings, fears, and opinions of your child.

Matt. 18:10: “Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven.”

Col. 3:21: “Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.”

27. Treat the child as though he is important to you and accepted by you.

Matt. 18:5-6: “Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me. But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.”

28. Avoid the use of words expressing anger or exasperation.

Prov. 15:1: “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”

Eph. 4:31-32: “Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”

29. Maintain the practice of daily Bible reading, discussions, and prayer.

Deut. 6:4-9: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart; you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

2 Tim. 3:15: “and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

Eph. 6:4: “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”

Ps. 1:1-3; 78:5-8; 119:9, 11: “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.” . . . “For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, the children who would be born, that they may arise and declare them to their children, that they may set their hopes in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments.” . . . “How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.” . . . Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.”

30. Become thoroughly involved as a family in a biblical church.

Heb. 10:24-25: “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Eph. 4:11-16: “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head - Christ - from whom the whole body, joined and knit together