

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; Matt. 18:10; Gen. 33:12-14).
2. Love him unconditionally (Deut. 7:7; 1 Jon 4:10, 19).
3. Look for opportunities in which you commend him. Express appreciation for him frequently (Phil. 1:3; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2 Thess. 1:3).
4. Seldom criticize without first expressing appreciation for good points (1 Cor. 1:3-13).
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; Prov. 22:6; Col. 1:27-28).
6. Do not compare him with others (Gal. 6:4; 2 Cor. 10-12-13; 1 Cor. 12:4-11).
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; Eph. 4:29-30; Col. 4:6; Prov. 12:18; 16:24).
8. Do not scold him in front of others (Matt. 16:22-23; 18:15; 1 Cor. 16:14).
9. Never make threats or promises that you do not intend to keep (Matt. 5:37; James 5:12; Col. 3:9).
10. Don't be afraid to say "no," and when you say it, mean it (Prov. 22:15; 29:15); 1 Sam. 3:13; Gen. 18:19).
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; 1 Cor. 16:14; 2 Tim. 2:24-25; 1 Tim. 5:1-2).
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; 2 Cor. 9:1-2; 1 Cor. 13:7).
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; 2 Tim. 4:11; 1 Tim. 4:12; John 6:5).

15. When you make a mistake with your child, admit it and ask your child for forgiveness (Matt. 5:23-24; James 5:16).
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

Welcome contributions from your child (Ps. 128; James 1:19; 3:13-18; Titus 1:6-8; Prov. 15:22).

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; 1 Pet. 4:10).
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; John 13:34; 1 Thess. 2:7-8).
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; Phil. 1:3-5; Col. 1:3-4; Eph. 1:15).
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; Gal. 5:22-23; 1 Pet. 3:4-5; Prov. 4:23; Matt. 23:25-28).
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; Prov. 4:15-18; 15:13; 17:22; Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21; Eccl. 3:4; Luke 15:22-24).
22. Help your child to learn responsibility by administering discipline fairly, consistently, lovingly, and promptly (1 Sam. 3:13; Prov. 13:24; 19:18; 22:15).
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; Prov. 22:6; Gal. 6:9; 1 Cor. 15:58; Isa. 28:9-10).

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; 1 Thess. 2:10-12; Phil. 4:9; 1 Tim. 1:5, 7).
25. Recognize that you are responsible to prepare your child for life in this world and the world to come (Eph. 6:4; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 78:5-7; 2 Tim. 3:15-17).
26. Be very sensitive to the needs, feelings, fears, and opinions of your child (Matt. 18:10; Col. 3:21).
27. Treat the child as though he is important to you and accepted by you. (Matt. 18:5-6).
28. Avoid the use of words expressing anger or exasperation (Prov. 15:1; Eph. 4:31-32).
29. Maintain the practice of daily Bible reading, discussions, and prayer (Deut. 6:4-9; 2 Tim. 3:15; Eph. 6:4; Ps. 1:1-3; 78:5-8; 119:9, 11).
30. Become thoroughly involved as a family in a biblical church. (Heb. 10:24-25; Eph. 4:11-16).

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?