



WEEK 6 – “Parenting Pitfalls”

INTRODUCTION

Last week, we focused on setting proper expectations for obedience and discipline. From early on, we want our children to begin evaluating their own responses so that they will recognize sin and learn to repent. Tonight, we finish our series with a question – how do you avoid raising a child who is spoiled, unhappy, and out of control? We will look at 10 common parenting mistakes. We **ALL** have struggles and issues in our families and personal lives. When God speaks through the Bible, we must make **CHANGES** to align our lives with His words. Failing to do this will bring calamities over time. As usual, all Christians will benefit from this study.

1. The Warning from God

- ✓ Parents are not to **PROVOKE** their children to wrath and anger.

Ephesians 6:4 – *And, ye fathers, **provoke not your children to wrath:** but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

NOTE The context of this verse is three verses on the children’s obedience to God and to their parents. It is important to note that they are accountable to God.

W1828 “Provoke”

To call into action; to incense; to enrage; to provoke to anger by offensive words or by injury; to provoke war.

However, although this verse is directed to fathers, it is a valuable lesson for both parents. So, how do parents provoke their children?

We will consider a list of things that you can do which will help you raise a child who is spoiled, unhappy, and out of control. And we definitely do not want that!

2. The Common Mistakes

- ✓ This is a list of how parents might provoke a child to wrath.

1) By **OVER**-protection.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Never trust them. Hang on too tight. Do not give opportunities to develop independence.

WHAT TO DO:

Parents must give children room to express themselves, to discover and try new things, gradually releasing them to live independently. Overprotection can frustrate and anger a child.

2) By **FAVORITISM**.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Favor one child over another.

WHAT TO DO:

Parents must not compare one child to another; each child is unique. We do not have to treat each one exactly the same (each has different needs), but we should love them all the same. If a child feels you LOVE another in the family more, that is a very, very frustrating experience.

3) By setting **UNREALISTIC** achievement goals.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Crush your children with pressure – school, sports, work, music, church, etc.

WHAT TO DO:

Parents must not try to impose their desired reputation on children. When a child never feels that they have pleased or excelled and feels constant pressure to do more and better, it leads to anger and bitterness. Some children, sadly, harm themselves due to extreme pressure.

4) By **OVER**-indulgence.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Give them everything they want; pick up after them always; give them no accountability and no responsibility.

WHAT TO DO:

Parents must be careful not to provoke them by letting them sin and get away with it, so they learn to do that successfully. Ultimately, when they go out into the world and people do not serve them or take responsibility for their mistakes, they will get angry and bitter and violent.

5) By **DISCOURAGEMENT**.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Never seek to understand, reward, or give children a listening ear, approval, honor, patience.

WHAT TO DO:

Parents must understand their children and what they are trying to accomplish. Seek to understand why certain behaviors occurred or why something happened a certain way. If they do not hear and feel encouragement, they will feel defeated, discouraged, and angry.

6) By failing to **SACRIFICE** for them.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Make the child feel like an intrusion in your life, constantly an interruption, always a bother.

WHAT TO DO:

Parents must be careful not to make family life all about the parents. If you choose to always do what you want to do, go where you want to go, and your job and friends are more important than your children, they will resent your being uncaring, unavailable, and self-centered.

7) By not allowing them to make small **MISTAKES** as they grow up.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Make a big, negative deal over all their mistakes and never commend them for progress.

WHAT TO DO:

Parents must expect progress, not perfection. Let them share ideas and plan silly things.

8) By **NEGLECT**.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Spend no time with them and do not discipline them consistently in love.

WHAT TO DO:

Parents must teach their children, spend time with them, and discipline in love consistently. Children need lots of time, love, discipline, and nurture.

9) By **ABUSIVE** words.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Be critical, unkind, and unloving in words and actions; use words of anger, sarcasm, ridicule.

WHAT TO DO:

Verbal abuse is a terrible thing. Frankly, we say things to our children we would never say to anybody else. Parents lose their tempers now and then, but if we say cutting, unkind things to our children, we need to apologize, confess our sin to them, and ask them to forgive us.

10) By **PHYSICAL** abuse.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Beat, abuse, and over-zealously punish your child as an angry, vengeful, irritated parent.

WHAT TO DO:

Parents must never physically abuse their children. When a parent over-zealously punishes a child, it is usually from an angry, vengeful parent who only cares that he has been irritated or inconvenienced, not that the child needs correction for his own good. Physical abuse has nothing to do with loving, controlled, God-honoring discipline and correction. It is physical punishment given in anger and vengeance, and it will provoke children to anger and wrath.

3. Final Helps

- ✓ The words of parents must **MEAN** something.

2 Corinthians 1:17-20 – *When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me **there should be yea yea, and nay nay?***

NOTE Parents often complain that their children do not listen to them or do not respect them. Our words must really mean something. When we speak, they need to know we are serious and really expect them to do what we say they should do.

Often parents use threats to try to intimidate their children rather than simply giving instructions, expecting obedience, and disciplining lack of obedience.

Parents fall into the habit of giving orders and then getting increasingly angry each time when not obeyed. Expect obedience the first time every time. No counting to ten, humoring, begging, or bribing. Carefully tell the child what is expected and then reward good behavior or discipline bad behavior.

In the same way, we should not make promises to our children we cannot keep. Do not say, "I will take you to the park tomorrow" and then not do it. Rather say, "*If everything goes according to plan, we will go to the park tomorrow.*"

- ✓ The purpose of Christian parenting is **DISCIPLESHIP**.

1 Corinthians 11:1 – *Be ye followers of me,
even as I also am of Christ.*

NOTE The goal of parenting is eternal salvation and loving obedience to Christ.

As a church, we know how the work of the Lord is multiplying disciples to bring God the most glory. We set our lives to make disciples who will make disciples!

Our children are our primary and first disciples because we live with them. They see our lives, and they know our hearts' desires. We have time to give careful instruction and to teach them these things. But sometimes it is easy to waste the time we are given with our children and even to put our effort into discipling others while we neglect our own kids. When we obediently teach our children day by day the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is one way of fulfilling the great commission that He has given us to make disciples.

In order to disciple your children, you must be with them. Too many mothers and fathers leave a child to himself rather than train him biblically. These kids will disgrace their mothers by their uncontrolled and ungodly behavior.

Many people assign others to raise their children. The Bible teaches that it is mom's and dad's responsibility to raise their children. God did not give your children to your parents to raise, or to the public school system. As your child's parents, you know them better than anyone. You love them the most. They need your guiding hand continually throughout each day. You get to do this!

- ✓ Biblical parenting and training takes **TIME**.

Mark 3:14 – *And he ordained twelve, **that they should be WITH HIM,**
and that he might send them forth to preach.*

NOTE When Jesus chose the twelve disciples, the Bible says that He chose them to be WITH HIM. His method of discipleship is sometimes called the, "with Him" method. He lived alongside His disciples and taught them how to live as Christians by example and by continual instruction in everyday situations.

In order to raise children for God's glory, we have to be **WITH THEM!** Amen.

Jesus had a plan to send His disciples out into the world to make a difference for God's glory. We also should have a plan to send our children out of our homes as they reach adulthood to make a difference for God's glory! Amen.

Probably the most difficult area of child training is consistently taking time EVERY TIME to do it well in the midst of a busy life. It is worth it. Do not quit!

Farming is a full-time job. In every season, there is work that must be done to build up a productive farm. Parenting is the same way. To give careful instruction takes time. Discipline takes time. To pray and to reconcile with the child takes time. Giving a child the chance to obey until success takes time.

4. Personal Application

- ✓ What are you going to do today to CHANGE for God's glory? for your family?