

Intentional Parenting

(because it doesn't happen by accident)

Formative Instruction—Goals
Faith Baptist Church

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May 16, 2018

Introduction: Parents must understand that we are in a competition when it comes to the rearing of our children. The enemy has a carefully crafted strategy; he preaches a consistent sermon; and he utilizes many tools of seduction. In what ways can he be neutralized? What resources exist for the Christian parent? How can he effectively use them?

Formative instruction is training and teaching that literally **shaping** the lives of our children. Such formative instruction is ongoing (Deut. 6:5-6) and stresses the central truth that God defines life. Two major resources exist for the formative training of our children: the Bible (information) and Christ (the example for conformation).

Our goals for our children must never reside on the mediocre level of “I hope they do well” or “They are a productive member of society.” Our goal should be no less than Christlikeness is their lives.

Parents must understand their God-given mandate to communicate God's ways and words to the next generation (Psalm 145:4; Deut.

32:46-47). Moreover this communication cannot be properly understood unless it is vividly demonstrated in the lives of the parents themselves (John 14:9; 1 Peter 4:11).

Formative instruction is not to be confused with discipline.

Formative instruction	Discipline
Ongoing	Seasonal
Proactive	Reactive

Four kinds of childrearing:

- 1. No instruction or discipline—failure
- 2. Instruction without discipline—fruitless
- 3. Discipline without instruction—frustration
- 4. Instruction with discipline—fruitfulness (Psalm 19:10-11)

Five Goals of Formative Instruction:

- 1. Remember Scripture as our **personal history** (Deut. 6:20-25).

When we remember Scripture as our personal history it shapes our relationship with it:

- a. How we **view** it.
No longer is it a book of irrelevant stories from a faraway place and time; it is our book. It is our family album.
- b. How we **value** it.
What books do you reread? What books would you save in a sudden fire?

c. How we **venerate** it.

To venerate means, “to give a place of honor or respect.” When the Bible is viewed as our family album and then valued as such, it will automatically be venerated in everyday life.

2. Develop godly **habits**

Early instruction results in patterns that are **resistant** to **change** (good and bad!).

The development of godly habits requires,

a. Providing of **context**

We must continually insert circumstances and events into a Biblical reality. The earlier we begin interpreting life experiences from a Biblical perspective, the more powerful habits become. (See 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14-15)

b. Promoting of **communication**

Communication is a two-way street. As parents we must learn to instruct and discipline. Equally as important is the need for real time feedback. Feedback cannot be gained from observation alone; we must open the channels of communication. Remember: people only communicate honestly when they feel safe.

c. Patterns of **consistency**

Consistent and repetitive behaviors, attitudes, and expectations are the pillars upon which good habits are built.

3. Apply **Scripture** to everyday life.

The application of Scripture to everyday life requires parents...

a. Who are **saturated** with Scripture

That with which we saturate our lives becomes the **lens** by which we view life.

Knowledge is Bible information assimilated; wisdom is Bible information **applied**.

Coaching becomes exponentially more effective after encountering real life game situations.

b. Who are able to See the **situation** (and help their kids to see it too)

What the situation **appears to be** and what the situation really is are often worlds apart (2 Kings 6:17).

c. Who ultimately Shape their Selections.

The way we respond to circumstances, and the principles by which we respond, must be consistently grooved into the behavior of our children

4. Model **authentic** spirituality in front of your children.

The spiritual life of a parent must be **substantive** if it is to be **emulated** (2 Tim. 3:5).

When truth does not dictate choices in our lives, it typically will not dictate choices in theirs.

Unauthentic Christianity is revealed by a,

a. Life of **hypocrisy**

A chief ally of hypocrisy is an overemphasis of achievable standards (Matt. 15:1-20).

b. Lack of **honesty/humility**

Parents in love with their perceived spiritual image generally frustrate and ultimately repel their children from Christian service (Eph. 6:4).

c. Loss of **heart**

The greatest possession a parent can have in the rearing of his children is their heart (Proverbs 23:26).

5. Grow into a **mature** relationship with your children.

Remember the keys to a truly mature relationship:

- a. **Time**—Deep and abiding relationships, like strong oak trees, take years to develop.
- b. **Truth**—Relationships without a shared set of values are doomed to superficiality (Psalm 48:12-14; 78:3-7)
- c. **Trust**—Transparency is the child of trust. In any relationship, dishonesty in any form always erodes.