**Principles of Parenting**

**INTRODUCTION:**

1. God teaches us in His word that children are both a great blessing and a great responsibility.
2. It’s the responsibility side that we want to emphasize in this lesson.
3. We want to look at some principles of parenting found in the Scriptures, but in passages that do not speak directly to parents.

**BODY:**

1. Parenting Principles—Proverbs 18
	1. Avoid contentious words (6-7).
		1. “A fool’s lips walk into a fight, and his mouth invites a beating. A fool’s mouth is his ruin, and his lips are a snare to his soul” (ESV).
		2. If the words we speak continually create conflict with our spouse, or with anyone else, it will certainly have a negative impact on our children.
		3. It creates tension, which is a tough environment for children; and it just sets a horrible example.
	2. Don’t feed children a steady diet of gossip (8).
		1. We often gossip about the people we know best, and the people we know best are our brethren.
		2. The very last impression we want to leave our children is that the “church is full of hypocrites.”
	3. Hear every side (13, 17).
		1. Important, certainly, if we have more than one child.
		2. If one of our children has a conflict with another child.
		3. As our children deal with teachers, coaches, other authority figures.
		4. Let’s not automatically side **with** or **against** our children.
	4. Learn to resolve conflicts (18-19).
		1. Children don’t need to see “bars” or “walls” between their parents. Children who grow up around quarreling parents will likely have some issues of their own.
		2. Of course, conflicts in general are difficult to avoid altogether, so we need to teach them and show them how to resolve them (may not be “casting lots”).
	5. Value your marriage companion (22).
		1. When children see each parent value and esteem the other, it sends a message they will likely never forget.
		2. This will even help them in their selection of a marriage companion.
2. Parenting Principles—1 Corinthians 6
	1. Don’t “air the dirty laundry” in front of them (6).
		1. The first half of this chapter is a rebuke—God rebukes these saints for taking their fellow-saints to court.
		2. But focus on v. 6 in particular.
			1. We certainly don’t want to air marriage differences before our children.
			2. But also, does every church issue need to be aired before these “unbelievers”?
			3. They may be to handle more as they mature, and when they become believers, but we need to be careful what we say in front of them.
	2. Teach children the seriousness of sin (9-10, 13-20).
		1. Let’s focus, first, on vv. 9-10.
			1. Besides stealing and extortion, these are things commonly accepted in our culture.
		2. The second half of this chapter deals with avoiding sexual immorality.
			1. We want to keep ourselves pure, and we also want to stress the importance of it to them.
	3. But, we also need to help them see the grace of God (11).
		1. We don’t ever want to make grace sound like a license to sin, but they also need to understand that “grace is greater than all our sin.”
		2. They need to know that whatever they have done, if they are willing to meet His conditions for forgiveness, He will forgive their sins through the blood of His Son, and He will remember them no more.
3. Parenting Principles—Acts 7
	1. Don’t show partiality (9).
		1. Not to excuse Joseph’s brothers, but what sparked this envy? “Now Israel (Jacob) loved Joseph more than all his children” (Genesis 37:3).
		2. And did it ever cause some trouble, and it still will today.
	2. Help children see that envy is evil (9).
		1. They need to see how selfish it is, how destructive it is.
		2. Illustrated in other Bible stories (Cain and Abel, Saul and David, Jesus).
	3. Teach children to admire the story of Joseph (9-14)—his faith, purity, perseverance, and willingness to forgive.
		1. Some good times and bad for Joseph, but his faith was a constant.
		2. Maintained his purity, even when Potiphar’s wife made advances toward him.
		3. Persevered through being sold into slavery, through the ordeal at Potiphar’s house, being put into prison, etc.
		4. And his exchange with his brothers is a shining example of how to forgive.
	4. Understand that those whom God has appointed us to lead may challenge us (24-28, 35, 39; Eph. 6:1-3).
		1. Just like the Israelites did with Moses.
		2. We’ll have to balance patience and firmness, but God has put us over them and they do need to learn to obey and respect us.
4. Parenting Principles—2 John 1
	1. Walking in truth is of supreme importance (1-4; 3 John 1:3-4).
		1. We rejoice in their other achievements—athletic, academic, artistic, but what matters most?
		2. Leading our children to become disciples of Christ is a long, slow process, but it has to be number one.
		3. We need to set the right example, and included in that is to be part of a local church that preaches and practices the truth.
	2. Protect children from those who teach contrary to the truth (6-8).
		1. We do our best to protect our children from all sorts of other dangers (car seats, cabinet latches, bike helmets, etc.).
		2. But what are we doing to protect them from all the teaching contrary to Scripture?
		3. Do we monitor what they listen to, what they read, etc.?
	3. Don’t welcome those who would destroy our children’s faith (9-11).
		1. We need to be careful about how closely we associate with those we know to be promoting error.
		2. If our children see no difference in the way we regard them and the way we regard those walking in the truth, we shouldn’t be surprised when they grow up without proper regard for the truth.
		3. A bad spiritual environment can be as dangerous to our children as Sodom was to Lot’s children.

CONCLUSION:

1. Much, much more could be said on this subject, but hopefully these principles will help us become better parents.
2. What about you? Are you walking in the truth? Have you obeyed the truth?