

# SIX FOUNDATIONAL PARENTING SKILLS BASED ON THE BIBLE

“Children have never been very good at listening to their parents, but they have never failed to imitate them” (James Baldwin, AD 1924-1987. American novelist, playwright, poet and social critic).

Bruce’s Discussion Guide

## SIX FOUNDATIONAL PARENTING SKILLS (BASED ON THE BIBLE)

### PARENTING SKILL #1 – REMEMBER EACH OF YOUR CHILDREN IS DIFFERENT

Proverbs 22:6 – “*Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.*” (NIV)

What we need to know about this passage...

First, it’s not promise, it’s a proverb – The book of Proverbs is not primarily a book of promises, it’s a series of approximately 900 observations about life that are generally true, but definitely not always true.

Second, the phrase “*in the way he should go*” is interpreted in several valid ways by various respected biblical commentators:

“*According to his way*” – Benson Commentary (Joseph Benson, AD 1749-1821, Methodist minister).

“*Literally, according to his way*” – Cambridge Bible for School and Colleges (published AD 1883)

“*The Hebrew literally is, initiate a child in accordance with his way*” – Pulpit Commentary (published AD 1890)

“*The instruction of youth...ought to regulate itself according to the stage of life...the method ought to be arranged according to the degree of development which the mental and bodily life of the youth has arrived at*” – Keil and Delitzsch OT Commentary. (Johann Keil and Franz Delitzsch lived in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and specialized in biblical

Hebrew and syntax).

*“The path especially belonging to, especially fitted for, the individual’s character” – Barnes’ Notes on the Bible (Albert Barnes, AD 1798-1870, theologian and Presbyterian minister).*

The phrase can legitimately mean three things:

- [1] Train your child according to the stage they are in right now (Keil&Delitzsch)
- [2] Train your child according to their personal strengths (Albert Barnes)
- [3] Train your child according to their temperament and personality (Benson, Cambridge Bible)

Key thought: don’t knowingly try to force your kids into a mold that they weren’t made to fit in.

1 Corinthians 12:6 – *“There are different ways that God works through people but the same God.”* (New Century)

Helping your children find their uniqueness is tough because of two cultural pressures:

- [1] The pressure to conform.
- [2] The pressure to compare.

Galatians 6:4 – *“Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves, without comparing themselves to someone else.”* (NIV)

## PARENTING SKILL #2 – VERBALLY AFFIRM THE VALUE OF YOUR CHILDREN

Matthew 10:29 & 31 – *“Not even a sparrow can fall to the ground without your Heavenly Father knowing it...and you are much more valuable to him than a whole flock of sparrows.”* (New Living)

How does God show He values us?

- [1] By noticing us:

Matthew 10:30 – *“God pays even greater attention to you, down to the last detail—even numbering the hairs on your head!”* (Message)

- [2] By showing us affection:

Hosea 11:4 – “I drew them to me with affection and love. I picked them up and held them to my cheek...” (Good News)

[3] By expressing appreciation:

Isaiah 43:4 – “...you are precious to me. You are honored, and I love you.” (New Living)

“Where did we ever get the crazy idea that in order to make children do better, first we have to make them feel worse? Think of the last time you felt humiliated or treated unfairly. Did you feel like cooperating or doing better?” (Jane Nelsen. Marriage, family and child counselor).

Proverbs 12:25 – “...a word of encouragement does wonders!” (Living)

### PARENTING SKILL #3 – GIVE YOU CHILDREN AGE-APPROPRIATE RESPONSIBILITY

Like 16:10 & 12 [Jesus] – “Whoever can be trusted with a little can also be trusted with a lot. And if you cannot be trusted with things that belong to someone else, who will give you things of your own?” (New Century)

Proverbs 24:16 – “Though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again, but the wicked are brought down by calamity.” (NIV)

### PARENTING SKILL #4 – DISCIPLINE YOUR CHILDREN IN LOVE

Proverbs 19:18 – “Discipline your children while they are young enough to learn. If you don't, you are helping them destroy themselves.” (Good News)

Proverbs 13:24 – “If you refuse to discipline your children, it proves you don't love them; if you love your children, you will be prompt to discipline them.” (New Living)

How do you discipline wisely in love?

[1] Avoid correcting using out-of-control anger

Ephesians 6:4 – “And now a word to you parents. Don't keep on scolding and nagging your children, making them angry and resentful. Rather, bring them up with the loving discipline the Lord himself approves, with suggestions and godly advice.” (Living)

[2] Select your words carefully

Ephesians 4:29 – *“Do not use harmful words, but only helpful words, the kind that build up and provide what is needed, so that what you say will do good to those who hear you.”* (Good News)

#### PARENTING SKILL #5 – SHOW YOUR CHILDREN UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

Two ways:

[1] Offer your children forgiveness

Ephesians 4:32 – *“Be kind and loving to each other, and forgive each other just as God forgave you in Christ.”* (New Century)

[2] Never give up on your children (even when you have lost all hope)

Isaiah 54:10 – *“The mountains and hills may crumble, but my love for you will never end; I will keep forever my promise of peace.’ So says the Lord who loves you.”* (Good News)

#### PARENTING SKILL #6 – PROVIDE YOUR CHILDREN WITH A PLACE OF REFUGE AND SECURITY

Proverbs 14:26 – *“Reverence for God gives a man deep strength; his children have a place of refuge and security.”* (Living)

Ingredients for good parenting?

[1] You have to set the example and follow godly principles.

[2] Ask you children to pray for you.

[3] Get the support of other godly parents.