

Biblical Wisdom for Parenting

1. God is the perfect parent. The more we know God, the better we will be at sharing God's love and wisdom with our children.

14 For this reason I kneel before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. 16 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:14-19)

Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children. (Ephesians 5:1)

2. As our perfect parent, God is very kind, compassionate, and forgiving.

8 The Lord is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger, abounding in love.
9 He will not always accuse,
nor will he harbor his anger forever;
10 he does not treat us as our sins deserve
or repay us according to our iniquities.
11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his love for those who fear him;
12 as far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

13 As a father has compassion on his children,
so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him;
14 for he knows how we are formed,
he remembers that we are dust. (Psalm 103:8-14)

3. God is always with us. His love is active, present, and engaged.

7 Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?
8 If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
9 If I rise on the wings of the dawn,
if I settle on the far side of the sea,
10 even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast.

11 If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me
and the light become night around me,"
12 even the darkness will not be dark to you;
the night will shine like the day,
for darkness is as light to you. (Psalm 139:7-12)

4. God creates boundaries for us, teaches us, and disciplines us. This is always flowing from a heart of love.

Be careful to obey all these regulations I am giving you, so that it may always go well with you and your children after you, because you will be doing what is good and right in the eyes of the Lord your God. (Deuteronomy 12:28)

5 And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says,
"My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline,
and do not lose heart when he rebukes you,
6 because the Lord disciplines the one he loves,
and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son." (Hebrews 12:5-6)

5. But all of God's commandments and discipline could not have set us free unless he also gave us forgiveness through Jesus and help through the Holy Spirit.

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. 2 And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. 3 The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. 4 He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit. (Romans 8:1-4)

6. The first thing our children need from us is to experience our loving presence in their lives.

Do everything in love. (1 Corinthians 16:24)

7. The second thing our children need is to see an example of wisdom in the way we live.

Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. (Philippians 3:17)

8. Our children need us to create a healthy structure for their lives and wise boundaries they must learn to respect.

1 Listen, my sons, to a father's instruction;
pay attention and gain understanding.
2 I give you sound learning,
so do not forsake my teaching.
3 For I too was a son to my father,
still tender, and cherished by my mother.
4 Then he taught me, and he said to me,
"Take hold of my words with all your heart;
keep my commands, and you will live. (Proverbs 4:1-4)

10 Listen, my son, accept what I say,
and the years of your life will be many.
11 I instruct you in the way of wisdom
and lead you along straight paths. (Proverbs 4:10-11)

20 My son, pay attention to what I say;
turn your ear to my words.
21 Do not let them out of your sight,
keep them within your heart;
22 for they are life to those who find them
and health to one's whole body. (Proverbs 4:20-22)

9. Our children need to experience our grace, compassion, and forgiveness when they fail.

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone.
Forgive as the Lord forgave you. (Colossians 3:13)

10. Our children need to experience loving, redemptive discipline.

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4)

11. Our instruction and discipline should focus more on healthy hearts than desirable behaviors.

Guard your heart above all else,
for it determines the course of your life. (Proverbs 4:23)

12. Our children need to participate in a wise, healthy community, which could include family, friends, school, and church.

Walk with the wise and become wise,
for a companion of fools suffers harm. (Proverbs 13:20)

13. Our children need us to fill their lives with things that are true, beautiful, and good.

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. (Philippians 4:8)

14. Our children need to hear us say, “I’m sorry. I was wrong. Please forgive me.”

23 “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift. (Matthew 5:23-24)

15. Our children need our prayers.

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. (Matthew 7:7)

16. Most of all, our children need to experience the love of Jesus.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

17. None of us are perfect parents, but God’s grace is sufficient for us.

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. (2 Corinthians 12:9)

18. The more we experience God’s forgiveness and grace in our own lives, the better we will be able to share forgiveness and grace with our children.

We love because he first loved us. (1 John 4:19)