

A GUIDE ON
**Godly Parenting in an
Ungodly World**

digital PDF



INNER FREEDOM MINISTRIES

Godly Parenting

As believers, we want our children to know and love God the way we do. Wisdom lets us know in Proverbs 22:6 that we should train up our children in the way they should go so that when they are older they will not depart from it. The Bible provides numerous passages on how to raise children in a way that honors God.

This guide is meant to help parents navigate the challenges of parenting by providing biblical insights and practical advice rooted in God's Word. By following these principles and teachings, parents can create a nurturing environment where their children can grow in their faith and relationship with God.

Ultimately, our goal as believers is to raise children who not only know about God but also have a personal and vibrant relationship with Him, living out His principles in their daily lives. Through prayer, patience, and persistence, we can trust in God's faithfulness to guide us as we shepherd our children towards a life of faith, love, and obedience to Him.

Pray for Guidance and Direction

Start your parenting journey with prayer. Seek God's wisdom and guidance as you navigate the challenges and joys of raising children. Proverbs 3:5-6 encourages us to trust in the Lord with all our hearts and lean not on our own understanding, but to acknowledge Him in all our ways, and He will direct our paths. Through prayer, you can align your desires and decisions with God's will for your children's lives. By surrendering your plans and aspirations to God, you invite His guidance and direction in shaping your children's paths according to His purposes. Proverbs 16:3 reminds believers to commit their plans to the Lord, and their plans will succeed.

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Pray for Your Children Consistently

Pray regularly for your children's spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being. Lift them up to God in prayer, asking for His protection, guidance, and blessings. James 5:16 reminds us that the prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

Teach Biblical Values

Grounding your parenting in the Word of God means using the Bible as your guidebook for teaching and instilling values that reflect God's character. Here are a few examples:

Love: The Bible teaches that love is the greatest commandment (Matthew 22:37-39). Teaching children about love involves not only showing affection but also demonstrating sacrificial love as modeled by Jesus Christ (John 15:13). Parents can teach children to love God, themselves, and others through their actions, words, and attitudes.

Kindness: Kindness is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) and a reflection of God's character. Parents can teach children to be kind by modeling kindness in their interactions with others and encouraging acts of kindness toward siblings, friends, neighbors, and even strangers (Ephesians 4:32).

Honesty: Honesty is emphasized throughout the Bible (Proverbs 12:22; Ephesians 4:25). Parents should teach children the importance of honesty in their words, actions, and relationships. Teaching children to speak truthfully, even when it's difficult, fosters integrity and builds trust.

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Humility: Humility is central to the Christian faith (Philippians 2:3-4), and parents play a crucial role in modeling and teaching humility to their children. Humility involves recognizing our dependence on God, acknowledging our limitations, and esteeming others above ourselves. Parents can cultivate humility in their children by encouraging a servant's heart and teaching them to value others' perspectives and needs.

Respect: Respect for God, authority, and others is a key biblical principle (Ephesians 6:1-3; 1 Peter 2:17). Parents can teach children to respect God by honoring His commands and seeking His guidance. Respect for authority figures, such as parents, teachers, and government officials, teaches children obedience and submission. Additionally, teaching children to respect others regardless of differences in age, race, or social status promotes empathy and understanding.

Lead by Example

Leading by example is one of the most impactful ways you can influence your children's behavior and character development. Children are keen observers and tend to emulate the actions and attitudes they witness in their parents. Therefore, modeling godly behavior is crucial in shaping their values and beliefs. Here are five ways you can lead by example:

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1. **Consistency:** Consistency in behavior is key to effective modeling. You should strive to consistently demonstrate godly traits such as love, kindness, honesty, humility, and respect in your interactions with others, especially within the family. Children are more likely to internalize these values when they observe them consistently demonstrated by you.
2. **Integrity:** Integrity is essential in leading by example. You should strive to align your actions with your words and values. Hypocrisy can undermine the credibility of your teachings and lead to confusion in children. By practicing what you preach, you reinforce the importance of integrity and honesty in living out your faith.
3. **Teachable Moments:** Everyday situations provide opportunities for you to model godly behavior and impart valuable lessons to your children. For example, if you encounter a conflict or disagreement with a neighbor, you can demonstrate humility and forgiveness by seeking reconciliation and extending grace. This teaches your children the importance of resolving conflicts peacefully and practicing forgiveness, as modeled by Jesus Christ.
4. **Servant Leadership:** You can model servant leadership by prioritizing the needs of others above your own. Whether it's volunteering at a local charity, helping a neighbor in need, or serving within the community, you demonstrate the importance of selflessness and compassion. By engaging in acts of service, you instill in your children a heart for serving others and living out the commandment to love one's neighbor as oneself.
5. **Faithfulness:** Modeling a consistent and vibrant faith is essential in nurturing your children's spiritual growth. You can demonstrate your commitment to God through regular participation in worship, prayer, Bible study, and involvement in church activities. Your children learn the value of prioritizing their relationship with God and seeking His guidance in all aspects of life by observing your faithfulness.

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Discipline with Love

Discipline is an essential aspect of parenting, but it should be done with love and in accordance with biblical principles. Proverbs 13:24 teaches that whoever spares the rod hates their children, but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them. When disciplining your children, it's important to approach it with love and care. Discipline should aim to correct and guide your children, not to harm or provoke them. Remember that your goal is to teach them valuable lessons and help them develop into responsible and respectful individuals. As you discipline your children, consider the following principles:

Love-Based Discipline: Always discipline your children out of love and concern for their well-being. Let your actions be guided by a desire to help them grow and learn from their mistakes.

Correction and Guidance: Discipline should focus on correcting behavior and guiding your children toward making better choices in the future. Use discipline as an opportunity to teach them about consequences and responsibility.

Consistency and Fairness: Be consistent in your discipline and ensure that consequences are fair and appropriate for the behavior. Consistency helps your children understand boundaries, while fairness ensures that discipline is administered impartially.

Communication and Instruction: Take the time to communicate with your children about why certain behaviors are unacceptable and what the consequences will be. Use discipline as a teaching moment to help them understand right from wrong.

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Positive Reinforcement: Along with discipline, remember to reinforce positive behavior through praise and encouragement. Positive reinforcement helps reinforce good behavior and encourages your children to continue making positive choices.

Physical Discipline: The use of physical discipline, such as spanking, is a controversial topic in the world. But this is a personal choice that each family should make with the leading of the Holy Spirit. While Proverbs 13:24 mentions the rod as a form of discipline, it's important to interpret this verse in the context of biblical principles such as love, fairness, and guidance. Obviously, spanking should always be done in a controlled and non-abusive manner.

Prayerful Guidance: Seek God's wisdom and guidance in disciplining your children. Pray for patience, wisdom, and discernment as you navigate the challenges of parenting and discipline.

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Encouraging Their Faith

Nurture your children's faith by teaching them about God, His love, and His plan for their lives. Help them develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through prayer, Bible study, and attending church. Deuteronomy 6:6-7 shows us God's heart toward His will and way and how we should talk about them, stating, "These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." Let's explore how you can effectively nurture your children's faith:

Teaching about God's Character: Introduce your children to the character of God - His love, mercy, grace, faithfulness, and how we are to have a respect for Him.. Share stories from the Bible that illustrate God's attributes and how He interacts with His people. Help your children understand that God is both loving and kind, but He is also severe as needed and will hold people accountable for their sins as stated in Romans 11:22 Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off.

Exploring God's Love: Teach your children about the depth of God's love for them as revealed through Jesus Christ. Share the story of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and His resurrection, emphasizing how His death and resurrection demonstrate God's love for humanity. Encourage your children to reflect on God's love and express gratitude for His saving grace.

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Discovering God's Plan: Guide your children in understanding God's plan for their lives. Help them discern their unique gifts, talents, and passions, and encourage them to use these gifts to serve God and others. Share stories of individuals in the Bible who followed God's plan for their lives and made a difference in the world.

Developing a Personal Relationship with Jesus: Encourage your children to develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through prayer, Bible study, and gathering together with other believers. Teach them how to pray, both individually and together as a family, and encourage them to share their joys, concerns, and thanksgiving with God. Engage in regular Bible study with your children, exploring Scripture together and discussing its relevance to their lives. Additionally, prioritize attending church as a family, participating in worship, fellowship, and learning opportunities within the faith community.

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Show Love

Demonstrate love to your children, just as God loves us. Let them know that your love for them is unwavering, regardless of their actions or behavior. This is beautifully captured in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, which describes the characteristics of love:

Patience: Love is patient. It is characterized by forbearance and long-suffering, enduring even in the face of challenges and setbacks. As parents, it's important to demonstrate patience with our children, understanding that growth and maturity take time. (1 Corinthians 13:4)

Kindness: Love is kind. It is marked by acts of compassion, generosity, and tenderness. Show kindness to your children through your words and actions, expressing care and concern for their well-being. (1 Corinthians 13:4)

Forgiveness: Love does not hold grudges or keep records of wrongs. It is quick to forgive and extends grace freely. As parents, forgive your children when they make mistakes or misbehave, just as God forgives us. Use moments of discipline as opportunities for teaching and growth, rather than harboring resentment. (1 Corinthians 13:5)

Encouragement: Love encourages and uplifts. It celebrates achievements, offers support during challenges, and provides a nurturing environment for growth. Encourage your children to pursue their dreams and aspirations, cheering them on every step of the way. (1 Corinthians 13:7)

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Honesty: Love rejoices in truth. It fosters open and honest communication, creating a safe space for authenticity and vulnerability. Be honest with your children, even when it's difficult, and encourage them to be truthful in their interactions with others. (1 Corinthians 13:6)

Protection: Love protects and shields. It provides a sense of security and safety, both physically and emotionally. Protect your children from harm, danger, and negative influences, while also empowering them to make wise choices and navigate life's challenges with resilience. (1 Corinthians 13:7)

Consistency: Love is consistent and steadfast. It remains constant even in the midst of changing circumstances. Be consistent in your expressions of love toward your children, demonstrating your unwavering commitment and devotion to their well-being. (1 Corinthians 13:7)

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Set Boundaries

Setting boundaries for your children is an essential aspect of parenting that provides structure, guidance, and security. By establishing clear boundaries rooted in biblical principles, you help your children understand the importance of obedience, respect for authority, and personal responsibility. Proverbs 29:15 highlights the significance of discipline and instruction in shaping a child's character and behavior, stating, "Discipline and instruction give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother." Let's explore the significance of setting boundaries and how it aligns with biblical teachings:

Establishing Clear Expectations: Setting boundaries involves clearly defining expectations for behavior, attitudes, and responsibilities. You should communicate these expectations to your children in a loving and consistent manner. Establishing clear boundaries helps your children understand what is expected of them and provides a framework for appropriate behavior.

Biblical Principles as Foundation: When establishing boundaries, it's essential to base them on biblical principles. The Bible provides guidance on virtues such as honesty, kindness, respect, and self-control, which serve as the foundation for setting boundaries. You can teach your children these values and help them understand how they apply to various aspects of their lives.

Obedience and Respect for Authority: Setting boundaries teaches your children the importance of obedience and respect for authority. Ephesians 6:1-3 instructs children to obey their parents in the Lord, for this is right, and promises blessings for honoring parents. By establishing and enforcing boundaries, you teach your children to respect your authority and obey instructions given in love.

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Protecting and Guiding: Boundaries serve to protect your children from harm and guide them toward making wise choices. By setting limits on behavior and activities, you create a safe and nurturing environment where your children can grow and thrive. Boundaries help your children understand the consequences of their actions and provide guidance on making positive choices.

Discipline and Instruction: Proverbs 29:15 highlights the importance of discipline and instruction in shaping a child's character and behavior. Discipline involves correcting misbehavior and guiding your children toward more appropriate actions. Instruction encompasses teaching your children about God's principles and helping them understand the reasons behind boundaries. Together, discipline and instruction provide your children with the wisdom and guidance they need to navigate life's challenges.

Consistency and Flexibility: Setting boundaries requires both consistency and flexibility. Consistency ensures that boundaries are enforced predictably, helping your children understand the consequences of their actions. Flexibility allows you to adjust boundaries as your children grow and mature, adapting to changing circumstances and individual needs.

Communication and Reinforcement: Effective boundary-setting involves ongoing communication and reinforcement. You should regularly communicate with your children about boundaries, explaining the reasons behind them and addressing any questions or concerns. Reinforcement involves consistently enforcing boundaries and providing positive reinforcement for adherence.

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Celebrate Milestones

Celebrating milestones in your children's lives is an important aspect of parenting that fosters a sense of accomplishment, belonging, and gratitude. Whether these milestones are spiritual or secular, marking them with celebration not only acknowledges your children's achievements but also reflects your appreciation for God's blessings and faithfulness in their lives. Psalm 127:3 beautifully captures the significance of children as a precious gift from the Lord, stating, "Children are a heritage from the Lord, a reward from Him."

Recognizing Achievements

Celebrating milestones allows you to recognize and acknowledge your children's accomplishments and growth. Whether it's a graduation, baptism, birthday, academic achievement, or personal milestone, taking the time to celebrate these moments shows your children that their efforts and achievements are valued and appreciated.

Example: Your child receives an award for academic excellence. Celebrate this milestone by hosting a special dinner to honor their hard work and dedication. Express your pride and appreciation for their achievements, highlighting the importance of diligence and perseverance.

Fostering Gratitude

Celebrations provide an opportunity to cultivate an attitude of gratitude in your children. By celebrating milestones, you teach them to reflect on God's blessings and faithfulness in their lives. Encourage them to express gratitude for their achievements and the support they've received from family, friends, and mentors.

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Example: Your child successfully completes a challenging academic year. Take time to reflect on the journey together as a family, expressing gratitude for God's provision, guidance, and strength throughout the year. Encourage your child to thank their teachers, classmates, and supporters who contributed to their success.

Honoring God's Faithfulness

Celebrating milestones is an opportunity to honor God's faithfulness and provision in your children's lives. By acknowledging God's handiwork in their achievements, you teach your children to recognize and appreciate His blessings. Celebrations become an act of worship and thanksgiving, acknowledging God as the source of every good gift.

Example: Your child reaches a significant birthday milestone. As you celebrate this occasion, take time to reflect on God's faithfulness in their life. Share testimonies of answered prayers and moments of divine provision, highlighting God's guiding hand in shaping their journey.

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Parenting with Patience and Perseverance: When Things Don't Go The Way You Planned

It can be incredibly frustrating and disheartening for parents when they feel like they've done everything they know to do from scripture, yet their child is still not making the right decisions. However, it's essential to remember that every child is unique, and there are no guarantees in parenting. Here's a guide for parents who are facing this challenge:

Pray Persistently: Keep praying for your child without ceasing. Prayer is powerful and can bring about transformation in their life. Bring your frustrations, worries, and hopes before God, and trust in His timing and plan for your child. Philippians 4:6-7 encourages us to pray about everything and to experience God's peace that surpasses all understanding.

Trust God's Sovereignty: Remember that God is sovereign over all things, including the choices and decisions of your child. Even when it seems like things are not going according to plan, trust that God is still at work. Romans 8:28 assures us that God works all things together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose.

Continue to Love: Continue to demonstrate love and support to your child, even when you disagree with their decisions. Love them as Christ loves us, without expecting anything in return. 1 Corinthians 13:7 reminds us that love always protects, trusts, hopes, and perseveres.

Practice Patience and Persistence: Parenting is a journey that requires patience and persistence. Keep communicating with your child, offering guidance and encouragement, even if they don't seem receptive at first. Galatians 6:9 encourages us not to grow weary in doing good, for in due season we will reap if we do not give up.

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Parenting with Patience and Perseverance: When Things Don't Go The Way You Planned

Seek Wise Counsel: Don't hesitate to seek wise counsel from spiritual leaders, mentors, or counselors who can offer support and guidance during challenging times. Proverbs 15:22 reminds us that plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers, they succeed.

Lead by Example: Continue to model godly behavior and integrity in your own life. Your child is watching and learning from your actions, even if they don't always acknowledge it. 1 Timothy 4:12 encourages believers to set an example in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity.

Release Control to God: Ultimately, you cannot control the choices your child makes. Release control to God and trust Him to work in their life according to His perfect will. Proverbs 3:5-6 reminds us to trust in the Lord with all our hearts and lean not on our own understanding, but to acknowledge Him in all our ways, and He will direct our paths.

Stay Hopeful: Hold onto hope and keep trusting in God's faithfulness. Your child's journey is not over, and God is not finished with them yet. Romans 15:13 encourages us to be filled with hope as we trust in God, knowing that He is able to bring about transformation and redemption in every situation.

Remember, parenting is a challenging yet rewarding journey, and God is with you every step of the way. Keep loving, keep praying, and keep trusting in His plan for your child's life.

Scriptures to Study

Proverbs 22:6 (NIV): "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it."

Ephesians 6:4 (NIV): "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 (NIV): "These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."

Colossians 3:21 (NIV): "Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged."

Proverbs 29:15 (NIV): "A rod and a reprimand impart wisdom, but a child left undisciplined disgraces its mother."

Proverbs 13:24 (NIV): "Whoever spares the rod hates their children, but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them."

Psalms 127:3 (NIV): "Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him."

Hebrews 12:11 (NIV): "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NIV): "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."

Proverbs 3:11-12 (NIV): "My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline, and do not resent his rebuke, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in."



GODLY PARENTING

DEEPER REFLECTION

How consistently do I prioritize seeking God's guidance through prayer in my parenting journey, especially during challenging times?

In what ways am I actively modeling godly behavior and values for my children to emulate in their own lives?



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DEEPER REFLECTION

Do I approach discipline with love and biblical principles, aiming to guide and correct my children rather than harm or provoke them?

How intentional am I in nurturing my children's faith and helping them develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ?



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DEEPER REFLECTION

Am I consistently praying for my children's spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being, trusting in the power of prayer as emphasized in James 5:16?

Do I consistently demonstrate love to my children, regardless of their actions or behavior, and how can I improve in showing patience, kindness, and forgiveness in my interactions with them?

BIBLE STUDY NOTES

TOPIC:

KEY VERSES:

INSIGHTS & KEY TAKEAWAYS:



RELATED VERSES





WORDS TO LOOK UP



PRAYER & NOTES:

BIBLE STUDY NOTES

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KEY VERSE:



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INSIGHTS & KEY TAKEAWAYS:



RELATED VERSES TO STUDY:





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