Series: Ancient Wisdom

**Proverbs for Your Parenting**

Proverbs 22:15, October 8, 2017

1. The task determines the tactics.

1. Parenting goals that miss the point.

* Trying to be your child’s friend.
* Trying to make your child successful.
* Trying to keep your child ‘safe.’
* Trying to make your child act ‘good.’
* Trying to give your child some religion.

1. Parenting should aim to untangle the foolishness that will choke a child’s well-being.

* Proverbs 22:15 *Folly is bound up in the heart of a child …*
* Proverbs 12:15 *The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.*
* Psalm 53:1 *The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.”*

1. Untangling the foolishness bound in a child’s heart requires everything we’ve got.

* Proverbs 29:15 *… a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.*
* Snoop Dogg: "[My children] need a full-time father, and no matter what else I may decide to do or not do, that's one job I'll never take for granted. It's the number-one priority in my life."

Q. Which (wrong) parenting goal is the biggest temptation to you?

Q. What’s the “folly” that’s bound up in a child’s heart?

Q. What’s wrong with leaving a child’s moral and spiritual education until they’re old enough to decide for themselves?

2. Parenting requires training not just expectations.

1. Children need to be initiated in the path of wisdom.

* Proverbs 22:6 *Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.*
* “Train up” = “dedicate” children to a particular way of life.
* “The way he should go” in Proverbs is the path of wisdom.
* Proverbs 23:19 *Hear, my son, and be wise, and direct your heart in the way.*
* A proverb is not a promise. It states a general truth without dealing with the exceptions.

1. A child’s response to his father’s wisdom will often mirror the child’s response to God.

* Proverbs 4:3-4 *When I was a son with my father, tender, the only one in the sight of my mother, he taught me and said to me, “Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments, and live.*

1. Parents are called to teach and model the path of wisdom for their children.

* Proverbs 29:17 *Discipline your son, and he will give you rest; he will give delight to your heart.*
* Proverbs 13:1 *A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.*

Q. If Proverbs 22:6 is a proverb not a promise, what is it saying?

Q. What happens if a parent disciplines bad behaviour a lot but never teaches, motivates or models the right way?

Q. What are some of the ways that a parent should teach their children, morally and spiritually?

Q. In Proverbs 4:3-4, why does the father tell his son to “hold fast my words” and not just to “hold fast to God’s words?”

3. Parenting requires more than just words.

1. There are some problems you can’t talk your way out of.

* Proverbs 29:15 *The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.*
* Proverbs 22:15 *Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.*

1. Words alone don’t communicate the seriousness of sin.

* Proverbs 29:19 *By mere words a servant is not disciplined, for though he understands, he will not respond.*

1. The challenge to discipline tests our love for our children.

* Proverbs 13:24 *Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.*

1. The goal of discipline is repentance not punishment.

* Proverbs 23:13-14 13 *Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you strike him with a rod, he will not die. 14 If you strike him with the rod, you will save his soul from Sheol.*
* Hebrews 12:11 *For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

Q. What is “the rod?” According to Proverbs 23:13, is it just a metaphor for a parent’s authority?

Q. According to Proverbs 13:24, why does a refusal to discipline our children demonstrate a lack of true love for them?

Q. Why aren’t words enough?

Q. If discipline is an expression of our love for our child, how should we do it?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study Proverbs 3:9-10.

**Notes:**