

PARENTAL GUIDANCE

Building a Strong Spiritual Foundation in Our Children

Foundation Scripture

Proverbs 19:20 (RSV)

“Listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom for the future.”

Key Scriptures

Proverbs 22:6

Deuteronomy 6:6–7

Ephesians 6:1–4

Colossians 3:20–21

Romans 12:2

2 Corinthians 10:4–5

Introduction: Parents Have Been Given an Assignment

One of the greatest responsibilities God gives parents and guardians is the privilege of training and guiding children.

Children need more than food, clothing, education, recreation, and protection. They need a **strong spiritual foundation**.

The world is constantly teaching our children. Friends are teaching them. Entertainment is teaching them. Social media is teaching them. Schools and culture are influencing the way they think.

Therefore, the question is not:

“Are my children being taught?”

The question is:

“Who is teaching them, and what are they being taught?”

God has given parents the responsibility of making the home a place of discipleship.

Deuteronomy 6:6–7 teaches us that God's Word should become part of everyday family life. Spiritual training is not something reserved for Sunday. It should happen when we sit at home, when we travel, when we get up, and when we go to bed.

Parental guidance is daily discipleship.

1. TRAIN YOUR CHILDREN FOR THEIR FUTURE

Proverbs 22:6

“Train up a child in the way he should go...”

Training is different from merely telling.

Athletes train.

Soldiers train.

Musicians practice.

In the same way, children need spiritual training before they encounter life's battles.

Parents are preparing children today for decisions they will have to make tomorrow.

Training should include:

- God's Word
- Prayer
- Worship
- Obedience
- Application
- Accountability
- Character development
- Discernment
- Faith
- Consistency

We should not wait until our children are in trouble before teaching them how to overcome trouble.

Key Principle

Instruction today creates wisdom for tomorrow.

Good spiritual training gives children tools they can use long after their parents are no longer standing beside them.

2. DON'T JUST CORRECT CHILDREN — ENCOURAGE THEM

Ephesians 6:4 teaches parents not to provoke their children to anger but to raise them in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Colossians 3:21 warns parents not to provoke their children so they do not become discouraged.

This means biblical parenting involves both **correction and encouragement**.

Correction is necessary.

Discipline is necessary.

Boundaries are necessary.

But correction should take place in an atmosphere of love, hope, and encouragement.

There is an important difference between godly correction and destructive criticism.

Godly correction builds character.

Destructive criticism creates resentment.

Godly correction gives hope.

Destructive criticism produces discouragement.

Godly correction restores.

Destructive criticism tears down.

Remember:

Encouragement is oxygen to the soul.

Parents should ask themselves:

“Does my child hear more about what they are doing wrong than what they are doing right?”

Speak words that build faith, courage, hope, and confidence.

Our words are seeds.

Eventually those seeds produce a harvest.

3. TURN CHILDREN AROUND ONE STEP AT A TIME

When a child begins moving in the wrong direction, parents can become frightened or frustrated.

But lasting transformation usually does not happen overnight.

It happens:

One day at a time.

One prayer at a time.

One Scripture at a time.

One conversation at a time.

One act of obedience at a time.

The goal is not simply behavior modification.

The goal is **heart transformation**.

Children need to develop their own relationship and fellowship with God.

Teach them:

God loves you personally.

Jesus died for you personally.

You can talk to God.

God wants to help you.

God's Word has answers for your life.

Five Practical Areas

Help children develop:

1. Relationship with God

2. Daily Bible reading

3. Prayer

4. Application of God's Word

5. Accountability

Don't merely ask:

“What did you read?”

Also ask:

“How are you going to apply what you read?”

Application turns information into transformation.

4. ASK YOUR CHILDREN THE FOUR QUESTIONS

Parents need to create an atmosphere where children can talk about their battles without immediately expecting condemnation.

The goal is not interrogation.

The goal is discipleship.

Regularly ask your children these four questions:

Question #1

“What is the devil tempting you with?”

Help children recognize temptation before it develops into destructive behavior.

Talk about pressures involving friendships, dishonesty, anger, pride, laziness, entertainment, social media, and other areas.

Teach them that temptation itself is not the same as yielding to temptation.

Help them find God's way of escape.

Question #2

“Are you mixed up in some type of trap?”

A temptation that is continually followed can eventually become a trap.

Children may become trapped in:

- Wrong friendships
- Secret habits
- Dishonesty
- Bitterness
- Unforgiveness
- Compromise
- Destructive internet habits

Teach children that asking for help is not weakness.

Help them bring hidden struggles into the light of God's truth.

Question #3

“How is your thought life?”

Children fight battles in their minds just as adults do.

Ask:

“What have you been thinking about?”

“What worries you?”

“What makes you afraid?”

“What thoughts keep coming back?”

Then help them compare those thoughts with God's Word.

Question #4

“What are your struggles?”

Every child struggles somewhere.

It may involve school, friendships, confidence, obedience, anger, fear, identity, or spiritual growth.

Parents need to become **safe people** their children can approach. (Like the shade of a tree)

When children talk:

Don't panic.

Don't immediately condemn.

Listen carefully.

Use God's Word.

Pray together.

Walk through the process together.

5. TEACH CHILDREN HOW TO GUARD THEIR THOUGHTS

2 Corinthians 10:5

We are instructed to take thoughts captive and bring them into obedience to Christ.

Children need to understand something extremely important:

You do not have to believe every thought that enters your mind.

Teach them to examine thoughts.

Does this agree with God's Word?

Does this move me toward Christ?

Does this produce faith?

Does this reflect God's character?

Children can learn a simple process:

REMOVE — REPLACE — REPEAT

REMOVE

Recognize and reject thoughts that contradict God's truth.

REPLACE

Replace the wrong thought with Scripture.

REPEAT

Continue doing it whenever the thought returns.

This teaches children that their minds do not have to become playgrounds for fear, condemnation, hopelessness, or deception.

They can learn to renew their minds with God's Word.

6. TEACH CHILDREN THEIR IDENTITY ACCORDING TO GOD'S WORD

Romans 12:2

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...”

Children are growing up surrounded by competing messages concerning identity, purpose, truth, and the human body.

Parents therefore need to establish biblical truth before conflicting messages take root.

Teach children:

God created you.

God loves you.

God has purpose for your life.

Your body belongs to God.

God's Word is the standard for truth.

Your identity as a believer is rooted in Christ.

According to Genesis 1:27, humanity was created in God's image, male and female.

According to 1 Corinthians 6:19–20, the believer's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Children should therefore learn to respect God's creation, God's purpose, and their bodies.

This teaching should not merely become an argument about culture.

It should become **discipleship in the home**.

The strongest defense against confusion is a mind continually renewed by God's Word.

7. MAKE GOD'S WORD PART OF EVERYDAY FAMILY LIFE

Deuteronomy 6 provides a beautiful picture of family discipleship.

God's truth was to be discussed:

When sitting at home.

When walking along the way.

When lying down.

When rising up.

In other words:

Make God's Word normal in your home.

Talk about Scripture.

Pray together.

Discuss decisions.

Talk about character.

Discuss temptations.

Celebrate answered prayer.

Talk about mistakes and what can be learned from them.

Discuss how Scripture applies to everyday situations.

Children should not think Christianity is something the family does only at church.

They should see Christianity **lived at home**.

8. MODEL WHAT YOU WANT YOUR CHILDREN TO BECOME

One of the most powerful teaching tools parents possess is their example.

Children watch how parents respond to:

Pressure.

Disappointment.

Conflict.

Money.

Temptation.

Other people.

Mistakes.

Forgiveness.

Prayer.

God's Word.

Children often remember what parents **do** more than what parents **say**.

Paul wrote:

1 Corinthians 11:1

“Follow me as I follow Christ.”

That is an enormous parenting principle.

Parents should strive to be able to say:

“Watch how I follow Jesus.”

Let your children see forgiveness in action.

Let them see patience under pressure.

Let them hear you pray.

Let them see you apologize when you are wrong.

Let them watch you study Scripture.

Let them see you trust God during difficult circumstances.

Faith is caught as well as taught.

9. PUT GOD BEFORE ENTERTAINMENT

Children need to learn priorities.

One practical family principle is:

GOD BEFORE ENTERTAINMENT

Before television.

Before video games.

Before phones.

Before social media.

Before endless entertainment.

Encourage children to spend time with God.

Read Scripture.

Pray.

Think about what was read.

Apply God's Word.

This is not merely about creating another rule.

It teaches a much greater truth:

God comes first.

10. PLANT GOOD SEEDS AND TRUST GOD FOR THE HARVEST

Parenting is much like gardening.

A gardener plants seeds today while believing for tomorrow's harvest.

Parents do the same thing.

Godly instruction is a seed.

Prayer is a seed.

Encouragement is a seed.

Correction is a seed.

Scripture is a seed.

Consistency is a seed.

Love is a seed.

A godly example is a seed.

Sometimes parents become discouraged because they do not immediately see results.

Don't stop planting.

The training you provide today may become the wisdom your child needs years from now.

11. PARENTS MUST KEEP GROWING TOO

Parents cannot consistently give their children something they refuse to develop themselves.

Therefore, parental guidance begins with the parent.

Continue:

Learning God's Word.

Growing spiritually.

Praying.

Seeking wisdom.

Developing character.

Finding trustworthy teachers.

Applying Scripture.

Admitting mistakes.

Growing in your relationship with Christ.

The goal is not perfect parents.

The goal is **growing parents** who are helping produce **growing disciples**.

12. BUILD A LEGACY THAT OUTLIVES YOU

Spiritual parenting is bigger than solving today's family problems.

We are preparing for another generation.

Deuteronomy 32:46–47 teaches the importance of setting our hearts upon God's Word and commanding our children to observe it because God's Word is our life.

Parents, grandparents and great grandparents have an opportunity to build something that can continue long after they are gone.

The ultimate goal is not merely raising children who behave properly.

The goal is to raise children who:

Love God.

Know His Word.

Recognize truth.

Know how to pray.

Guard their thoughts.

Resist temptation.

Walk in their identity in Christ.

Serve others.

Follow Jesus.

Teach the next generation.

That is a spiritual legacy.

PARENTAL GUIDANCE — THE COMPLETE PATTERN

Parental guidance can be summarized with these principles:

TRAIN them in God's Word.

TEACH them God's truth.

TALK with them about their battles.

LISTEN before reacting.

ENCOURAGE more than you criticize.

CORRECT with love and hope.

MODEL what you teach.

PRAY with them and for them.

PROTECT their minds through biblical truth.

APPLY Scripture to everyday life.

REPEAT the process consistently.

TRUST GOD with the results.

FAMILY DISCUSSION

Parents can regularly sit down with their children and ask:

What did God teach you this week?

What are you struggling with?

What are you being tempted with?

Is there anything you feel trapped by?

How is your thought life?

What Scripture are you applying?

What can we pray about together?

Then listen.

Don't make every conversation a *lecture*.

Some of the most effective parental guidance begins when parents stop talking long enough to hear what is happening inside their children's hearts.

FINAL CHALLENGE TO PARENTS

Ask yourself:

Am I intentionally training my children spiritually?

What seeds am I planting?

What are my words producing in them?

Can my children safely talk to me about their struggles?

Am I modeling the Christianity I am teaching?

Is God's Word part of our everyday family life?

Am I preparing my children merely to behave—or preparing them to follow Jesus when I am not around?

The greatest evidence of successful parental guidance is not simply a child who obeys while the parent is watching.

It is a young person who has been equipped to recognize truth, make godly decisions, overcome temptation, renew their mind, apply God's Word, pray, and follow Jesus for themselves.

Conclusion

Parents have been entrusted with an extraordinary opportunity.

We are not simply raising children.

We are training disciples.

We are planting seeds.

We are shaping hearts.

We are building spiritual foundations.

We are preparing children for battles they have not encountered yet.

We are helping establish a faith that can continue into the next generation.

Therefore:

Teach them diligently.

Encourage them continually.

Listen to them carefully.

Correct them lovingly.

Model Christ faithfully.

Pray for them consistently.

Fill their minds with God's Word.

And trust God for the harvest.

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for entrusting children to our care. Give us wisdom to teach them, patience to train them, discernment to understand their struggles, and love to guide them without discouraging them.

Help us make our homes places where Your Word is honored, prayer is practiced, truth is taught, encouragement is abundant, and Jesus Christ is clearly seen.

Teach us to model what we expect from our children. Help us plant good seeds even when we cannot immediately see the harvest.

Manifest in our children Your wisdom to recognize temptation, courage to resist deception, discernment to guard their thoughts, and a deep personal relationship with You.

May the spiritual foundation established in our homes produce sweet fruit not only in our children, but in our grandchildren and generations yet to come.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.

[Click here.](#) Resources. Teachings for Effective Family Training



SUREFOOTED MINISTRIES
ROOTED IN TRUTH. EQUIPPED FOR LIFE.

*"Listen to advice and accept instruction,
that you may gain wisdom for the future."*
Proverbs 19:20 (RSV)

PARENTAL GUIDANCE

Building a Strong Spiritual Foundation

TRAINING TODAY • STRONGER TOMORROW • GENERATIONS FOREVER

*Faithful
Parents...
Brighter
Tomorrows*



STRONG
FAMILIES

STRONGER
GENERATIONS

A BRIGHTER
TOMORROW

*"Train up a child in
the way he should go,
and when he is old he
will not depart from it."*
Proverbs 22:6 (NKJV)

12 KEYS TO EFFECTIVE PARENTAL GUIDANCE

1 TRAIN FOR THE FUTURE  • Teach God's Word • Build character • Develop spiritual tools • Prepare for life's challenges Proverbs 22:6	2 ENCOURAGE AND CORRECT  • Speak words of life • Correct with love • Give hope, not discouragement • Build confidence Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21	3 TURN THEM AROUND ONE STEP AT A TIME  • Focus on heart transformation • Build a relationship with God • Bible reading and prayer • Accountability Ephesians 6:4	4 ASK THE FOUR QUESTIONS  • What is the devil tempting you with? • Are you in a trap? • How is your thought life? • What are your struggles? James 1:14; Galatians 6:2
5 GUARD THEIR THOUGHTS  • Examine thoughts • Remove wrong thoughts • Replace with God's truth • Repeat consistently 2 Corinthians 10:5	6 TEACH THEIR IDENTITY IN CHRIST  • God created them • Teach God's design • Their body is God's temple • Renew their minds Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20	7 MAKE GOD'S WORD A DAILY PART OF LIFE  • Talk about Scripture daily • Pray together • Discuss real-life decisions • Live it at home Deuteronomy 6:6-7	8 MODEL WHAT YOU WANT THEM TO BE  • Show forgiveness • Demonstrate patience • Let them see you pray • Live what you teach 1 Corinthians 11:1
9 PUT GOD BEFORE ENTERTAINMENT  • Set healthy priorities • Limit media and distractions • Spend time with God • Teach self-control Psalms 119:37	10 PLANT GOOD SEEDS AND TRUST GOD  • Plant instruction, prayer and love • Be consistent • Don't give up • Trust God for the harvest Galatians 6:7	11 KEEP GROWING SPIRITUALLY  • Keep learning God's Word • Keep praying • Keep seeking wisdom • Be the example your children need 2 Peter 3:18	12 BUILD A LEGACY THAT OUTLIVES YOU  • Raise disciples, not just children • Teach the next generation • Leave a heritage of faith • Impact generations Deuteronomy 32:46-47

STRONG PARENTS | STRONG CHILDREN | STRONGER GENERATIONS

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