

The Toddler (Chapter 4, The Faithful Parent)

Toddlers are information receivers, mimickers, investigators, interrogators and fidgeters who will attempt to do anything they see anyone else do.

They are naïve, impressionable, inattentive to danger and desperate for a father's instruction and mother's teaching (Prov. 1:8).

I. Initial thoughts (pp. 53 & 54)

- The issue of " _____ "
- Toddlers need to be _____ and _____.
- Q: Can a toddler learn to _____ ?

II. Bible's Perspective (pp. 55-56)

- Q. Are we really lacking Biblical truth on the toddler?

III. Discipline (pp. 56-60)

- Avoid being too _____.
- _____ matter (why?).
- Discipline is more than _____.
- Discipline with _____, _____,
_____ and _____.
- Don't waste the _____ !

IV. TTs (pp. 60-62)

- _____ is a serious issue.
- The TTs require _____ and _____ parenting.
- Discipline is not _____, _____ or _____ your child.
- Q. What's wrong with manipulation?

V. Biblical Instruction (pp. 62-64)

- Your toddler can _____ scripture.
- _____ is a gift for instruction and praise.
- Q. Does your B.I. have to be _____? Must we do " _____"?

VI. Examples and Common-Sense Tips (pp. 64-69)

Remember: My example is key to _____ I want to teach to my child!
(Matt. 4:19)

- My toddler can have a _____ heart.
- My child can learn _____.
- My toddler can learn the joy of _____ and _____.
- Q. Which of the 7 tips is meant for you?

to prepare a meal or do the dishes. Hospitality is a great way to teach your children selflessness.

7. DISCIPLINE WITH FAITHFUL CONSISTENCY IN ORDER TO ERADICATE FOOLISHNESS.

A few verses from Proverbs:

- “Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.” (22:15)
- “Do not withhold discipline from a child, for if you strike him with the rod he will not die. If you strike him from the rod, you will save his soul from the grave.” (23:13–14)
- “Whoever spares the rod hates his son but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.” (13:24)
- “The rod and reproof give wisdom but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.” (29:15)

Let me say a couple of things here. My wife and I did a very poor job of disciplining our children until we read Ted Tripp’s book *Shepherding a Child’s Heart*. Up until that point, we had used every worldly manipulative mechanism in order to discipline our children. “I’m going to count to three” or “you’re making daddy so sad” or “I promise you I’m going to discipline you now.”

You can make these empty threats—“if you keep doing that

I’m going to take you home”—but when you do this, you aren’t really teaching your kids to obey.

This is how it worked for us. I’d ask them, “Do you know what you did wrong?” They say, “yes, I didn’t take out the trash.” I’d say, “Do you know what I’m going to do now?” They’d say, “yes, you’re going to discipline me.” Afterward, I would have them sit on my lap, and I would pray with them.

Why do you do this? To be in charge? No. To get your own frustration and anger out of your system? No, never. You do this to eradicate foolishness.

8. USE THE PRACTICAL GOSPEL WITH PERSONAL APPLICATIONS IN ORDER TO REPRODUCE DISCIPLES.

If you added up the importance of everything I’ve said so far, it would not be as important as this last point. Show them how the grace of God works. You show kids how to do stuff—math, basketball, how to drive, etc. So teach them how the grace of God works. They need the grace of God when you are dead and gone. So teach them the gospel—that Christ died accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried and raised. And teach them the implications of the gospel. Teach them what it means to be saved. Evangelize them. Then teach them how the gospel is for sanctification and growth. Teach them *your* need for the gospel.

Here’s the main thing I want you to remember: when you sin against your family—and you will—you need to call a family meeting. You need to say, “I just did something that was sinful. I spoke to your mother in a way the Bible says I shouldn’t. I want you to know that I’ve confessed this to the Lord, and he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. But I want you to know what you just saw me do was sin, and I want you to forgive me. I make no excuses. It’s not because I’m tired or something your mother did. It’s not a habit I have. I’m prideful and sinful. I’m guilty. I’m sorry and I will make steps not to repeat this. The bottom line is this, kids: your dad is sinful and I need grace. I need Jesus Christ.”

We as children sometimes look at our fathers and say “they can do no wrong.” But we aren’t perfect. So, from the very beginning, don’t your children be let down when you mess up. Let them say, “I love my dad but I love my savior more. I love that champion. I love the one who forgives sinners. That’s who I’m looking to. My dad isn’t perfect but he’s leaning on the one who is.”

It’s hypocritical to call your children to account for their sins but never admit your own. Their problem is that you are their father and Adam is your father. They need to see the gospel lived in order to live the gospel. If we aren’t living the gospel before