

# The Perfect Parent

## You can't Be One If You Don't Have One



The following observations of God's style of parenting as well as His ability to understand and help us in our struggles as human parents could give us all something to aim at.

**The perfect parent thinks of his children first**, seeing them as fellow travelers rather than luggage to be towed along behind. The act of creation or procreation does not make you a parent. The only path to parenthood is personal sacrifice and a commitment to love. God chose to call Himself a father. In the Old Testament He repeatedly refers to the Hebrews as His children, but he later showed how much he loved them by allowing

Himself to be crucified. Human parents can break every rule in every discipline book as long as they remember that Love never fails, and that love works best when we make sure our children live with it and understand it.

**The perfect parent shares scripture.** God tells us human parents how he wants it done. "Fix these words of Mine in your hearts and minds, tie them as symbols toon your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children...write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates." (Deut.11:19-21). If you can't get your children to hold still

while you tie Bible verses to their wrists and hands, write out a daily verse by hand or download verses from the internet so the children can at least have a single verse in their pocket or purse

If you don't have gates and doorposts, put a verse on the refrigerator or just above a doorknob. To raise a child without Scripture is to raise a godless child—a long way indeed from perfection.

**The perfect parent keeps his promises.** God never has to ask forgiveness. Human parents do. Nothing is more important. It teaches our children the one thing they will need most—the ability to start over. Asking forgiveness of our children for something big like divorce or something smaller like a missed sporting event is not taking the blame for the past; it is clearing the way for the future. Our failure to do this is leaving us with a nation of children who refuse to allow anyone to help them because they are too full of hurt and unforgiveness. God does not have to ask forgiveness for anything but if His children's lives and souls were at stake he would. Will you. Fewer than 40 percent of our nation's children are now living with both parents.

Perhaps we need to say something like this when we fail in our marriages:

*Honey, love is very, very hard. No human being has ever gotten it just right. I do my best to love you. I am still doing my best to love your mother/father but sometimes we get it wrong. Will you forgive me and help me keep on trying?* Look in their eyes and if you are not sure they forgive you ask again the next day.

**The perfect parent reaches outside their own family.** “Religion that God accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after the orphans” (James 1:27)

God even says you can recognize members of his family by their hospitality. Having your children’s friends into your home is a sure way to influence them before they influence your children—the only real solution to peer pressure. It is definitely something God would do—invite his children’s friends to get to know him better.

**The perfect parent spends time with their children.** Being WITH his children is so important to God that he even named himself (Immanuel-God With Us). You don’t have to change your name to be a good parent but you may have to change your priorities. Most children will quickly forget what we do and say,

but they will remember always how we made them feel...important or unimportant. The real key to quality time is whether you are emotionally present or not. As a self test ask yourself how long it has been since you looked your child in the eyes and said something to encourage him or her, something like: “That was very kind, that was wise, that was being a good friend, your mother will like that, sometimes you are a pretty fine child, I’m proud of you.

The perfect parent does more than tell his children what not to do. He helps them find things to do. “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works. (Eph.2:10). *Sharing* household chores can be a child’s first step in learning to enjoy work...the one thing (statistically) that guarantees he/she will never spend time in prison. Whistle while you work is another way of saying “Whatever you do, do it as unto the Lord.”

The perfect parent remembers his GOALS for his children. He focuses on what is important. “For I know the plans I have for you, plans to give you hope and a future.” (Jer. 29:11) God makes His most important goals very clear, that his children are drawn to him and enjoy him, that they love one another, that they learn right

from wrong, that they have a servant’s heart, and that they become leaders and teachers, not followers. Parents who fail to keep a similar list of what is most important will be dragged through life by one small emergency after another. Having goals is important. Having them written down is something God would do.

None of us can hope to be a perfect parent. Our one hope is to spend as much time as possible with the one who is and share in his wisdom, how he gets along with His children.

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