

PARENTING WITHOUT ANGER

By Terry Jones, June 22, 2008
Christ's Church at Tiffin, Ohio

Ephesians 6:4

CENTRAL SERMON THEME – Do not cause your children to be angry but bring them up with biblical discipline and instruction.

INTRO. - We need a license to drive a car. We need an education and in many cases a degree from a college or university to have a job. We need a license to get married. We even get a certificate of birth and death. But there are no requirements for becoming a parent! We aren't required to take parenting classes, we don't need a certificate or a license that says we are now mature enough. There is no college degree that is called "Parenting." Yet the destiny of the next generation lies in the hands of parents today!

A father of three children won a shouting contest for registering 115.8 decibels, louder than a train passing overhead on an elevated railroad. For that winning shout, Kato won the \$750 grand prize of the 10th annual Halls Year-End Loud Voice Contest. How prepared Kato for this contest? He admitted that he probably built up his loud voice shouting at his children. Resource, Jan/Feb 1991.

Loud angry shouts in the home do not benefit the one shouting or the one hearing. No one wins when we shout. Those loud and bitter shouts carry a message with the words. The transfer is anger. This worship service cannot turn you into an expert today in parenting but today's Scripture can help us to parent with less anger. *Ninety percent of the friction of daily life is caused by the wrong tone of voice.* Leadership, Vol. 1, Number 4, p. 23. God instructs us on how to parent our children.

I. DO NOT PROVOKE YOUR CHILDREN TO ANGER

- A. The tensions of being parents combined with the stresses of children growing up create conflict and anger in the home.
 - 1. "Provoke not your children to wrath."
 - 2. The word "provoke" means "to irritate" or "to make mad or angry."
 - 3. The Bible instructs us to stop provoking our child(ren) to anger.

- B. What causes a child to become unruly or rebellious? Avoid these stimulants for anger in children. (Source - John MacArthur)

1. Overprotection
 - a. Smother them, fence them in, never trust them, and always wonder whether they're telling you the truth will cause anger.
 - b. In their environment, where everyone else takes certain risks and has certain opportunities, if they are compressed into a confined area, they'll begin to resent you.
 - c. Parents, your children are people, and little by little they need to face the world and learn how to deal with it.
 - d. Illus. - Families can suffer from a problem called "Apron String Syndrome." This syndrome is the result of the control of the parents over the child until the child does whatever the parents desire. A parent often dictates where the children live, what they do, and where they go. This syndrome starts with overprotection. It can cause anger.
2. Favoritism
 - a. Preferring one child over another builds resentment and anger.
 - b. Biblical Examples - Isaac favored Esau over Jacob, and Rebekah favored Jacob over Esau—you may know what terrible agony that caused.
 - c. Applic. - Don't ever compare a child with siblings. You'll discourage him, make him angry, and break his spirit. Don't say things such as "Why can't you be bright like your sister? You always get C's and she gets A's" or "I never have to tell him twice to do anything" or "Why don't you act like your brother?" or "I only wanted two kids; why did you have to come along?" Favoritism will destroy a child.
3. Unreasonable demands
 - a. We can shove our child so hard to fulfill the goals we never accomplished that we damage the child.
 - b. Many parents pressure their children to excel in school, sports, or other activities, and it causes them to become bitter.
4. Unrealistic expectations about maturity
 - a. We need to allow for childishness
 - b. Trying to make our children perfect frustrates them.
5. Neglect
 - a. Ex. - King David neglected his son Absalom. The King was too busy ruling the nation, fighting wars, supervising his employees, and enjoying his success to worry about Absalom. Absalom became his greatest heartbreak of David's life. Absalom rebelled against his father to take over his throne but his life ended

tragically when he hit a tree limb entangling his hair. One of David's men killed him. You can't neglect your children and win.

b. Harry Chapin wrote:

Cats In The Cradle

My child arrived just the other day
He came to the world in the usual way
But there were planes to catch and bills to pay
He learned to walk while I was away
And he was talkin' 'fore I knew it, and as he grew
He'd say "I'm gonna be like you dad
You know I'm gonna be like you"

And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon
Little boy blue and the man on the moon
When you comin' home dad?
I don't know when, but we'll get together then son
You know we'll have a good time then

My son turned ten just the other day
He said, "Thanks for the ball, Dad, come on let's play
Can you teach me to throw", I said "Not today
I got a lot to do", he said, "That's ok"
And he walked away but his smile never dimmed
And said, "I'm gonna be like him, yeah
You know I'm gonna be like him"

And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon
Little boy blue and the man on the moon
When you comin' home son?
I don't know when, but we'll get together then son
You know we'll have a good time then

Well, he came home from college just the other day
So much like a man I just had to say
"Son, I'm proud of you, can you sit for a while?"
He shook his head and said with a smile
"What I'd really like, Dad, is to borrow the car keys
See you later, can I have them please?"

And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon
Little boy blue and the man on the moon
When you comin' home son?
I don't know when, but we'll get together then son
You know we'll have a good time then

I've long since retired, my son's moved away
I called him up just the other day
I said, "I'd like to see you if you don't mind"
He said, "I'd love to, Dad, if I can find the time
You see my new job's a hassle and kids have the flu"

But it's sure nice talking to you, Dad
It's been sure nice talking to you"

And as I hung up the phone it occurred to me
He'd grown up just like me
My boy was just like me

And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon
Little boy blue and the man on the moon
When you comin' home son?
I don't know when, but we'll get together then son
You know we'll have a good time then

6. Bitter words with cruel physical punishment
 - a. If we take our anger out on our children, we transfer our anger to them.
 - b. The anger needs to stop with us for our children had no part in the abuse or mistreatment we experienced.
7. Hypocrisy causes anger in children.
 - a. We order our children to obey our rules but they see us breaking our own rules.
 - b. Ex. - When I was growing up, fathers would tell their sons and daughters, "I smoke but you should not smoke." My friends whose parents smoked were usually smoking in private by the time they heard these words.
 - c. A child may temporarily resent openness and honesty.

C. Do all you can to not provoke your children to anger.

II. MATURE YOUR CHILDREN WITH DISCIPLINE

- A. No children are perfect to the extent they will never need correction.
 1. "Bring up your children in the discipline of the Lord."
 2. Discipline means to direct your child with your instruction and to apply loving discipline when the child disobeys.
 3. Applic. - The pain of discipline in the formative years is much less than the heartbreak and results of learning the hard way.
- B. Principles of discipline for children
 1. Families need to establish fair and reasonable rules for their children.
 2. When rules are broken clear and concise communication about the reason for the discipline needs to be explained.

3. Discipline is given when the rules are broken because overlooking rule infractions will cause the parent's anger to build until the child is over disciplined for a minor violation.
 - a. Parents will discipline a child saying, "One more time and you will get it!"
 - b. Children expect discipline when they misbehave.
4. Discipline can take several forms: time out, denial of privileges temporarily, grounding, and sometimes spanking
 - a. Young children respond better to spanking.
 - b. Use your hand on the part where the body meets the chair.
 - c. Do not strike in the face or slap.
 - d. When all reason is exhausted and defiant behavior rebels against your authority as a parent, spank.
5. All discipline is within the atmosphere of Godly love.
 - a. *We must face the fact that many today are notoriously careless in their living... We have liberty, we have money, we live in comparative luxury. As a result, discipline practically has disappeared. What would a violin solo sound like if the strings on the musician's instrument were all hanging loose, not stretched tight, not "disciplined"?* A.W. Tozer, Men Who Met God.
 - b. God takes a long term view of the Christian's life and disciplines us toward making us like Jesus Christ in attitude and behavior.

C. Proverbs

1. Prov. 13 :18 - He who ignores discipline comes to poverty and shame, but whoever heeds correction is honored.
2. 15:32 - He who ignores discipline despises himself, but whoever heeds correction gains understanding.
3. 29: 17 - Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul.

III. NOURISH YOUR CHILDREN WITH INSTRUCTION.

- A. Bring them up in the instruction of the Lord.
 1. Paul mentions discipline before he speaks of instruction.
 2. We live in a time when instruction is considered a substitute for discipline.
 3. Ex. - I am amazed how we accept instruction, practice, and discipline in the sports world but we rebel against it in the moral world. No one has spoken more abusively to me than some of the

coaches I had in school. I ran laps in a gym because I did not follow the coach's directions. I stayed for an hour or two until I hit at least 20 of 25 foul shots. I accepted it. You have also had these experiences.

4. Applic. - God disciplines us. Hebrews 12:10-11; For they (earthly fathers) disciplines us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

B. Quote - The child lacks the equipment and experience necessary to form an accurate picture of self, so the only guide is the reactions of others. There is very little cause for him/her to question these appraisals, and in any case the child is far too helpless to challenge them or to rebel against them. -- Harry Stack Sullivan

1. Our children need positive feedback from their parents which is affirming them when they do right and correcting them when they disobey.
2. Ps. 119:9 - How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word.
3. 2 Tim. 3:15 - Timothy had known the Scriptures or Bible from childhood.

C. Ex. - Courtney Martin, a teacher and writer, wrote A Crisis of Attention and Intention. She recalls the experience of Josh Waitzkin, a 2003 graduate of Columbia University. He returned to his favorite political theory professor's class. As Professor Dennis Dalton lectured about Gandhi's mass civil disobedience to resist British imperialism, the students flipped open their laptops and started clicking away. Only a few took notes for most of them were flipping back and forth from shopping on Amazon.com, cruising Facebook, changing their social calendar, emailing, playing solitaire, chatting online, and buying tickets on Expedia. Josh wrote a letter to his former prof challenging the students to "Please seize the moment and listen deeply to Dalton's final lecture. Close the computers... Learning is an act of creativity, not mind-numbing, tv watching passive receptivity." The professor gave copies of the letter to his class. Many of them experienced it as a wake-up call. (The American Prospect, A Crisis of Attention and Intention, May 19, 2008, by Courtney E. Martin)

CONCLUSION - A four year old was at the pediatrician for a check up. As the doctor looked into her ears, he asked, "Do you think I'll find Big Bird in here?" The little girl stayed silent. Next, the doctor took a tongue depressor and looked down her throat. He asked, "Do you think I'll find the Cookie Monster down there?" Again, the little girl was silent. Then the doctor put a stethoscope to her chest. As he listened to her heart beat, he asked, "Do you think I'll hear Barney in there?" "Oh, no!" the little girl replied. "Jesus is in my heart. Barney's on my underwear."

God wants Jesus in our hearts. He is not looking at the exterior but at the heart. Let Christ help you with your anger. Our anger stops at the cross. Jesus forgives His persecutors as an example for us. God's anger against our sins stops at the cross. Jesus satisfies God's anger with His death, burial, and resurrection. By faith we accept His sacrifice for us.