

"Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth." Psalm 127:4
Session 7: Embracing Biblical Methods: Communication

- I. **Goals and methods should be complimentary**
- II. **Life that is worth living should be lived under the Lordship of Jesus Christ**
- III. **Proverbs 23: instruction on rich, full communication and appropriate use of physical discipline**
 - A. See Proverbs 23:13-19, 22, and 26
 - i. Physical discipline of children along with rich, sensitive communication
 - ii. We tend to separate these—the harsh disciplinarian vs. the tender sensitive parent
 - iii. Proverbs 23 puts them together
 - B. This passage describes rich communication that prohibits cold, tyrannical discipline
 - C. Provides a context for honest, open communication in which the child:
 - i. Can feel known and understood
 - ii. Can even grow in the understanding of himself
- IV. **Communication: dialogue, not monologue**
 - A. Communication is not just the ability to express ourselves
 - B. **Learn to talk *with* your children and not just talk *to* them**
 - C. The finest art of communication
 - i. Is *not* your ability to express your ideas
 - ii. **It *is* the ability to *understand* your child**
 - iii. Skilled communication enables you to help your children articulate their thoughts
 - D. We need to be people who are able to draw others out
 - i. Learn to ask good qualitative questions that can't be answered by "yes" or "no."
 - ii. We need to listen to what is being said
 - iii. Also listen for what is not being said
 - iv. Let your child know that you delight in them
 - E. Certain questions can be used to gain certain types of information
 - i. "What?" questions reveal information
 - ii. "How?" questions reveal process
 - iii. "What did you want to accomplish?" questions reveal motivation

- iv. "Help me understand" questions also reveal motivation
- v. "How often?" or "where?" questions reveal patterns
- vi. Understand the value of multiple-choice questions
- F. Parents need restraint to ask good questions, using pleasant words to promote instruction

V. When something has gone wrong

- A. **Focus on understanding your child**
- B. **Your goal is to engage your child**
 - i. You want more than "what"
 - ii. You want to understand "why" — focus on what is going on inside your child
- C. The example of the new sneakers
 - i. Focus on the explanation that shows what the child was thinking
 - ii. Helps you see the hopes and struggles of your child's heart

VI. Your good desire can be summarized in several ways

- A. Your child's behavior reflects his heart
- B. What is the abundance of the heart?
- C. **Internal issues of the heart are more important than behavior**
- D. You want to be able to look at the world through your child's eyes
 - i. This is a tremendous encouragement to your children
- E. **You want to bring the encouragement of the gospel to your children**
 - i. The incarnation of Christ is a wonderful model for us
 - ii. He lived in our world and he understands our struggles
 - iii. Christ is able to sympathize with our weaknesses
 - iv. Great encouragement in Hebrews 4

VII. Two functions as parent

- A. Stand above your child as his authority
- B. Stand alongside your child as one who has experienced these same struggles

VIII. Various types of communication

- A. Our communication needs to be multi-faceted and richly textured
- B. I Thessalonians 5:14
 - i. Different types of communication for different circumstances
 - ii. We can wound our children with a rebuke, when instruction is what is necessary

C. Types of communication (from Proverbs)

- i. Encouragement
- ii. Correction
- iii. Rebuke
- iv. Entreaty
- v. Instruction
- vi. Warning
- vii. Teaching
- viii. Prayer

D. **Your communication will take many forms**

- i. Subtle, rich nuances for each form
- ii. This is necessary for them to understand God's ways and God's truth

Principle: Communication with your child involves listening to their words, observing their nonverbal actions, understanding what is going on in their heart and engaging in their world.

Homework: Read chapter 8 in "Shepherding a Child's Heart". Try to have a date night to discuss the following questions:

1. What problems are we experiencing in our communication with our child?
2. What changes do we need to make in our conversational style with our child?
3. What are 5 or 6 good questions for drawing out what our child is thinking or feeling?
4. When and where are the best times to communicate with our child?
5. Do you find it more difficult to stand above your child as authority or beside your child with understanding as you help them process the struggles of life?

Resources: familylifetoday.com

"Parenting as a Child of the King" by Nina Roesner

"Connecting to Your Kids" by Greg Wright

"Never Walk Away" by Crawford Loritts