

# Excellent Wife in Training **Group Workbook**

By Jill Wragg

# Contents

Introduction	1
Home Management Binder	6
<b>(Three themes of chapters: Spiritual, Organizational, or Familial)</b>	
Chapter 1 Laying the Foundation (S)	9
Chapter 2 Spiritual Disciplines (S)	15
Chapter 3 Love Your Husband (F)	21
Chapter 4 Keeping Up with Your Home/Cleaning and Organizing (O)	27
Chapter 5 Fear and Anxiety (S)	37
Chapter 6 Love Your Children (F)	43
Chapter 7 Redeeming the Time and Scheduling (O)	51
Chapter 8 Teaching Obedience (S)	59
Chapter 9 Intimacy (F)	71
Chapter 10 Meal Planning (O)	77
Chapter 11 Grease and Grace (S)	87
Chapter 12 Self-Control Training (S)	95
Chapter 13 Devotions for Families (F)	99
Chapter 14 Chores for Children (O)	105
Chapter 15 Seasons of Life and Service to the Church (S)	115

## Pre-Study / Meeting 1

The Home Management Binder (HMB) will be your notebook for this class. I hope that it will help you continue seeking to be an excellent wife in organization, family focus, and personal spiritual growth. There are fifteen chapters in this workbook, which include practical application worksheets to help you think through the most common areas of life that a married woman needs to have a handle on. If you aim at nothing, you are sure to hit it, but if you have goals to aim at, you are much more likely to see progress in your life, home and heart!

I don't know about you, but in the busyness of life, often important things can be forgotten. God calls us to "work heartily, as for the Lord . . . . It is the Lord Christ whom you serve" (Col 3:23–24). In Proverbs 31 we find an industrious woman keeping her finger on the heartbeat of her home. The invention of the smartphone has definitely allowed us many new digital ways to keep our calendar, notes, and contacts handy. However, there is still a place in life for putting pencil to paper and doing some old-fashioned planning. The HMB gives you one place to keep not only the things you learn in EWIT, but also your organizational, familial, and spiritual goals to refer back to week after week.

In time, the seasons of your life will grow, change, pass, and renew. You may find yourself needing to change how you clean your home or how you plan your meals. You may add to your family or subtract from it as kids move in and out. You may find you've gotten yourself into a habit of forgetting an ordered way of cleaning your home and you need to go back and remember the goals you set out to achieve. Your home binder tool is there for you. Let it be your second brain to keep your life and home functioning smoothly and orderly.

### What Is the Point?

The Home Management Binder is your briefcase, your planner, your goal-keeping location, your second brain, your emergency information holder, your family-focusing reminder, your schedule location, etc. The point is to do what you do in an excellent way.

### How Do I Set This Up?

Purchase clear page protectors, if desired, for your worksheets. Label the dividers: Schedule, Personal Devotion/Disciplines, Menu Planning, Cleaning Schedule, Husband/Children, etc. (You can make these more specific or different as you adapt it to your own needs.)

### When Will I Use It?

Ideally, you will come to use your binder daily. What area of my home am I cleaning this week? Whose job is it to clean the living room mirror? What is for dinner tonight? How can I bless my husband this week? What was his favorite meal? Etc.

### Now What?

Throughout the fifteen weeks of Excellent Wife in Training, you will have planning worksheets and suggestions to get you going on organizing these different areas of your life. If you already have something you're doing that works, that's great! Maybe this is a time for you to share that with others. Or, perhaps it's a reminder time to sharpen an area you've been deficient in. Maybe it is time to try something new. Whatever it is, each lesson in the EWIT workbook fits into a section of your Home Management Binder.

- [Flylady.net](http://Flylady.net) (The Home Management Binder is called “The Control Journal”.)
- [Titus2.com](http://Titus2.com) (*Managers of Their Homes* and *Managers of Their Chores* include workbooks on schedules and master chore lists.)
- *Home Management: Plain and Simple*, Kim Brenneman

Allow the Bible to be the grid through which you  
pour every other idea.

Alistair Begg



## How-To

There were many skimpy years between the Lord and me when my kids were small. At the time I didn't see where I would fit Bible reading and focused prayer in with all I had to do. Hindsight is 20/20, and I can see now that my priorities just weren't straight enough. I sipped the skim milk when I could have been gulping the whole cream! Let me encourage you to avoid this weakness that I struggled with.

### Personal Devotions

- *Are you a believer?* This workbook is seeking to minister to those who want to grow in their walk with God.
- *Find a consistent place.* There is much to be said for “muscle memory” as your body slips into the same place each time you study God’s Word.
- *Keep what you need nearby.* Use a pretty basket or shelf next to your “spot” to keep your current study/Bible/notebook/journal handy.
- *Find the best time of day to go to this spot and learn from the Word.* Morning before kids wake up, during mid-morning break time, nap time, or after the kids go to bed at night?

### Reading/Studying Ideas

- Choose a short book of the Bible. Read it all the way through every day for a month.
- Read a chapter of Proverbs a day every day each month. There are 31 chapters in Proverbs!
- Read a psalm a day.
- Use a “Read Through Your Bible in a Year” plan.
- Use a study guide to help you dig deeper into a book of the Bible.

### Prayer Suggestions

- Have a set time of day to pray alone with God when the kids aren't awake.
- Pray with your kids at every meal. Teach them to fold their hands, close their eyes, and be quiet when others pray, or repeat after you till they can do it themselves.
- Pray with your family during family devotions.
- Keep cards for each day of the week and spread out your prayer list to make it manageable.
- When you promise to pray for someone, do it immediately afterwards, for starters, so you don't forget!
- Pray with your husband before going to sleep each night.
- Pray with the kids in the car each time an ambulance passes.
- Seek to make prayer your first response in crisis, in a moment lacking wisdom, or when you are tempted to be frustrated or angry at people around you.
- Cry out to God verbally, so your kids can hear, when you are being tested.

Whatever keeps me from my Bible is my enemy, however harmless it may appear to be.

A. W. Tozer

We are to work at Bible study. The scriptures do not disclose their riches to lazy minds and hearts.

Sinclair B. Ferguson

The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime; And His song will be with me in the night, a prayer to the God of my life.

Psalm 42:8

## Bible

### Daily Bible Reading Sample

A chapter of Proverbs a day fits perfectly in a month. Or follow John MacArthur’s method and read a small book every day for a month or several chapters every day and keep going through the same book for a month.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Proverbs 1	Proverbs 2	Proverbs 3	Proverbs 4	Proverbs 5	Proverbs 6
or					
1 John 1	1 John 2	1 John 3	1 John 4	1 John 5	1 John 6

### Or Use a Daily Bible Reading Plan:

- Robert Murray McCheyne’s plan
- *The MacArthur Daily Bible*

### Suggested Devotional Books

- John MacArthur, *Strength for Today, Drawing Near, Daily Readings from the Life of Christ*
- Charles Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening*
- Arthur Bennett, ed., *Valley of Vision*

## Prayer

### Prayer Cards Sample

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Pastors/Leaders	Government	Older Relatives	Unsaved Family	Husband	Parents
Child 1	Child 2	Child 3	Child 4	Child 5	Child 6
Church Members	Church Members	Neighbors	Small Group	Missions	Family
A-D	E-H	Church Members	Church Members	Church Members	Church Members
		I-L	M-P	Q-T	U-Z

## Alphabetical Notebook

Using notebook paper, label pages with each letter of the alphabet. List all the church families alphabetically by last name, as well as family and any other friends. Use this for personal prayer or at mealtime or devotions with the whole family. With 26 letters of the alphabet pray through these loved ones each month!

## ACTS Prayer Style

We often use this at our women's Bible study and in my family devotions:

- Read a passage on Adoration of God (Psalm 95:6), then pray (or take turns) praying only Adoration.
- Read a passage on Confession (James 5:16), then pray Confessing sin.
- Read a passage on Thanksgiving (Psalm 100:4), then pray words of Thankfulness to God.
- Read a passage on Supplication (Phillipians 4:6), then pray your requests (Supplication) to God.

## Praying the Word/Singing

What words are better than God's own words? Pray the psalms. Try praying the Scripture and substitute your name as needed to personalize it. Sing your prayers.

O LORD, our Lord,  
How majestic is Your name in all the earth,  
Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!  
From the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength  
Because of Your adversaries,  
To make the enemy and the revengeful cease.  
When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,  
The moon and the stars, which You have ordained;  
What is man that You take thought of him,  
And the son of man that You care for him?  
Yet You have made him a little lower than God,  
And You crown him with glory and majesty!  
You make him to rule over the works of Your hands;  
You have put all things under his feet,  
All sheep and oxen,  
And also the beasts of the field,  
The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea,  
Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.  
O LORD, our Lord,  
How majestic is Your name in all the earth!  
Psalm 8



- *Golden Keys to Prayer*, Charles Spurgeon
- *Reaching the Ear of God*, Wayne Mack
- *How to Study Your Bible*, John MacArthur
- *Expository Studying*, Joel James
- *Expository Listening*, Ken Ramey
- *The Twin Pillars of The Christian Life* by Wayne Mack

## **Apps:**

- Ref Net (sermon audio on a timetable like the radio)
- BibleGateway (read or listen to the Bible)
- Grace to You (Sermons, resources, blog and Bible reading plans)
- BlueLetterBible (The Bible and collections of study tools)

The word discipline has disappeared from our minds, our mouths, our pulpits, and our culture. We hardly know what discipline means in modern American society. And yet, there is no other way to attain godliness; discipline is the path to godliness. You must learn to discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.

Jay Adams



## How-To

### Memorization

- Copy down a verse every day from your reading to meditate on throughout the day.
- Post verses on your bathroom mirror, kitchen cabinets, in your car. Everywhere! Laminate verses and hang them on your mirror. Carry a ring of verses and index cards in your diaper bag to study while waiting in lines or at offices. Do this instead of surfing the internet.
- Find an accountability partner and ask each other once a week to recite your verse. This is a great way to memorize the verses from the Wise Words for Moms chart.\*

### Evangelism

- Know your own testimony and be prepared to share it with others!
- Keep tracts in your purse for restaurant servers and others you run into while out.
- Share the gospel with your children! They are your mission field!

### Solitude

- Plan time to be still before the Lord. Get up before the kids or have an afternoon quiet hour. Pray, read, memorize, fill your mind with truth.
- Remember how important it is to maintain a deep relationship with Christ throughout your busy, labor years. Constantly evaluate if you're getting daily intake of Him.

### Fasting

- Start off small. Try half a day to start.
- Consider any medical issues you have and if fasting would be problematic.
- Should be limited to fasting from food for the purpose of prayer as per the Scripture.
- Seek to not be obvious that you are fasting (E.g. don't plan it for a potluck or church meal day or when company is coming over.)

### Journaling

- Many keep a notebook of dated prayer requests and praises.
- Keep a record of your spiritual thoughts, convictions, and memorize verses as you read each day.
- Record your growth or maturation for your children to glean from when they're older.

### Stewardship

- Commit with your husband how much and when you can financially give to the church.
- Make use of the gifts He has bestowed upon you (e.g., time, money, belongings, spiritual gifts), and be a good steward of that!

### Learning/Growth

- Being in this group is already a proof that you are willing to learn and grow! Good job!
- Push yourself in areas your emotions don't feel like doing. If you aren't a sermon listener at home, keep trying. If you haven't tried memorizing or reading through the Bible in year, try today!

Evangelism is a natural overflow of the Christian life. Every Christian should be able to talk about what the Lord has done for him or her and what He means to him or her. But evangelism is also a discipline in that we must discipline ourselves to get into situations where evangelism can occur, that is, we must not just wait for witnessing opportunities to happen.

Donald S. Whitney

We are free to be holy.

Jerry Wragg

- Have older women and your husband help you see areas you can be working on.

## Worship

- Recognize that worship is not just singing. It is listening to God's Word, meditating on God's attributes, praising God, and delighting in Him.

## Church

- Attending church is a non-negotiable. God calls us to go serve the local bride of Christ with our gifts (Rom 12:3–8; 1 Cor 12; Heb 10:24–25).

## Memorization Suggestions

### Memorize a Verse

Memorize (study and meditate) verses specifically helpful for your sanctification process. For example:

- Do you worry a lot? Memorize from Philippians.
- Do you get angry easily? Memorize from James.
- Do you tend to want to control everything? Memorize from Romans.
- Do you lack discipline? Memorize 1 Tim 4:7.

### Memorize a Chapter

Memorize a chapter, verse by verse, until you know the whole chapter.

- Romans 12
- 2 Peter 1
- 1 Corinthians 13
- Colossians 3
- Psalm 1 or 23
- Proverbs 31

### Memorize a Book

Even better, memorize whole books. Start small.

- 3 John
- Titus
- Philemon
- Colossians

- *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, Donald Whitney
- *Disciplines of a Godly Woman*, Barbara Hughes
- *God's Priorities for Today's Woman*, Lisa Hughes
- *Worship: The Ultimate Priority*, John MacArthur
- *A Call to Scripture Memory*, Susan Heck
- *His Word in My Heart*, Janet Pope
- *A Call to Discipleship*, Susan Heck
- *If You Bite & Devour One Another*, Alexander Strauch
- *Faithfulness*, Lou Priolo
- *Practicing Hospitality*, Ennis and Tatlock
- *Tell the Truth*, Will Metzger
- *Holiness*, J. C. Ryle
- *The Master's Plan for the Church*, John MacArthur
- *Life in the Father's House*, Mack and Swavely
- *Fundamentals of the Faith*, John MacArthur
- *Partners (One-on-One Discipleship)* , Mike Fabarez

At the foundational level, the difficulties in our marriages do not first come because we don't love one another enough. They happen because we don't love God enough; and because we don't love God enough we don't treat one another with the kind of love that makes marriage work.

Paul Tripp



## How-To

The older ladies of our church compiled a list of ways you can practically show love to your husband. There are 100 other little ways for each different husband but this should be a good place to start!

1. Love God more than your husband.
2. Die to self.
3. Pray for him.
4. Treat him as a brother in Christ.
5. Respect him as the head of the home as God has made him.
6. Submit to him in everything except sin.
7. Communicate, communicate, communicate.
8. Laugh together with him.
9. Enjoy being his lover.
10. Be his friend, know him inside and out.
11. List all the ways you're thankful for him and guard your thoughts. Dwell on his positive qualities.
12. Listen when he talks about his work: ask questions and take interest!
13. Prioritize him above all others.
14. Make him your #1 source of input above your parents and friends.
15. Ask what he wants done and do what he asks. Do it well, do it first.
16. Never speak ill about him to others.
17. Keep within the budgets he sets.
18. Don't complain to him about things you don't have or can't afford. Learn to be content.
19. Make your home a place he wants to be. Make home a refuge where he is loved and wanted.
20. Be home when he's home.
21. Always seek to consult him about plans that involve him.
22. Don't be his mother; be his wife.
23. Study him; know him.
24. Remind yourself what you loved about him when you first met.
25. Show deference for his family. Seek peace with his mother.
26. Remember your vow to God to love this man and the biblical command to respect him.
27. Encourage him spiritually, even when you wish he were encouraging you.
28. Follow his decisions and leadership as long as he isn't asking you or the kids to sin. Trust God with the results, even if they are poor, knowing God is teaching him as well as you.
29. Pay attention to his likes and dislikes.
30. Allow him time to pursue hobbies or make/keep friendships in his free time without guilt.
31. Listen to him. Be a sounding board and be praying that God will use you to speak the truth he needs to hear.
32. Set him up for success—provide the opportunities for him to be the spiritual leader and protector. Remember: nagging undermines this loving gesture.
33. Make a plan with him on who you can talk to if he needs help.
34. Thank him and express your gratefulness for His leadership and for the way he works hard to provide for the family.
35. Let him know the good, the bad, and the ugly about you, your thoughts, and fears so he can help you grow. However, if there are things that don't fulfill Ephesians 4:29, then honor that.
36. Allow him to be the dad he is.
37. Build him up in front of the children.
38. Keep him informed on detailed character issues with the kids so he can engage them.
39. Encourage communication from children to father, and father to children.
40. Make time to be alone, either at home or out on a date or weekend away.

In these labor years of parenting I encourage you to focus on loving your husband in the true definition of love. Agape self-sacrifice. The worldly definition of love is not the kind that lasts a lifetime, and certainly cannot sustain in the pressures of raising children and the trials of life.

Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

James 5:16

Proverbs on communication: 10:19; 10:32; 15:1; 15:28; 15:33; 21:19; 22:17-21; 25:11-3; 31:26

## Your Encouragement-Psalm 121

I will lift up my eyes to the mountains;  
From where shall my help come?  
My help comes from the LORD,  
Who made heaven and earth.  
He will not allow your foot to slip;  
He who keeps you will not slumber.  
Behold, He who keeps Israel  
Will neither slumber nor sleep.  
The LORD is your keeper;  
The LORD is your shade on your right hand.  
The sun will not smite you by day,  
Nor the moon by night.  
The LORD will protect you from all evil;  
He will keep your soul.  
The LORD will guard your going out and your coming in  
From this time forth and forever.



Favorite breakfast:  
Favorite lunch:  
Favorite dinner:  
Favorite snack:  
Favorite restaurant:  
Favorite drink:  
Favorite hobby:  
Favorite dessert:  
Favorite cookie:  
Favorite color:  
Favorite car:  
Favorite doctrine:  
Favorite preacher:  
Favorite sport:  
Favorite teams:  
Favorite way to relax:  
Favorite vacation:  
Favorite people to spend time with:  
Favorite family activity:  
Favorite night out activity:  
Favorite holiday:  
Favorite music:  
Favorite movie:

What first drew me to marry him?

What are his strengths?

What weaknesses can I encourage him in most?

What character flaws has he pointed out in me that I need to work on?

What areas would he like for me to serve him/sacrifice more in?

What priorities has he communicated to me that I need to diligently work on?

In what ways can I protect him (spiritually, physically, emotionally, socially)?

What can I do to make our communication better (put off or put on)?

In what ways am I setting him up for success as a spiritual leader?

In what ways am I setting him up for success as a provider?

How can I bless him? What brings him joy?

Do I know what and how I can be praying for him?

Am I available to be his sounding board in problem solving for work, people, or ministry if needed?

How can I pursue him more when he arrives home?

How can I pursue him more in intimacy?

Can he trust me with his innermost thoughts (as are fitting with Eph 4:29)?

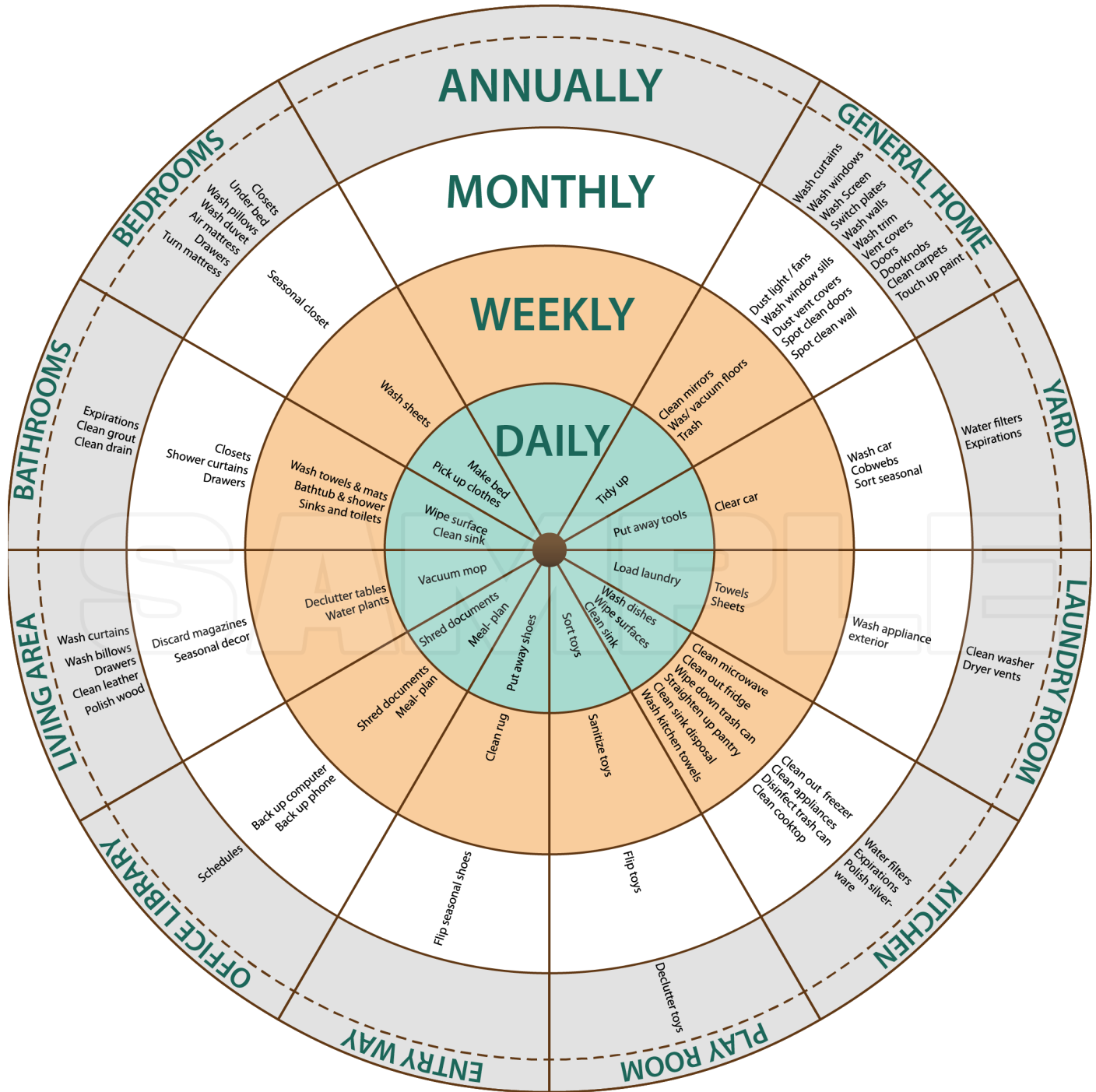
- *The Excellent Wife* (and study guide), Martha Peace
- *The Exemplary Husband*, Stuart Scott
- *Sweethearts for a Lifetime*, Wayne Mack
- *What Did You Expect?*, Paul David Tripp
- *Friends and Lovers*, Joel R. Beeke
- *Love That Lasts: When Marriage Meets Grace*, Gary and Betsy Riccuci
- *Prayers of an Excellent Wife*, Andrew Case
- *Maximum Impact*, Wayne Mack

If you fail to plan, you plan to fail. If you plan nothing, it should come as no surprise when you accomplish nothing.

Tim Challies



# Keeping Up With Your Home – Application



## Cleaning Schedule sample

Daily
Make bed Clean kitchen Pick up all clothes off floor Tidy bedroom/living room Sweep house Kids' chore packs

Monthly	Two a week
Week 1	Clean window sills Clean one major appliance
Week 2	Declutter one closet Clean microwave
Week 3	Clean kitchen cabinets Dust ceiling fans/change vents
Week 4	Handles, doors, light fixtures Clean fridge

Monday Laundry - lights/colors Clean van Clean out fridge Menu plan	Tuesday Laundry - towels Bathrooms Grocery shopping Pick one monthly chore	Wednesday Laundry - gentle clothes Dust furniture Glass/mirrors
Thursday Laundry - darks Take out all trash Bedrooms/sock drawer	Friday Laundry - sheets Mop Floors Vacuum floors/sofa	Saturday Laundry - work clothes Sort mail/declutter desk Set out clothes for Sunday Pick one monthly chore
Sunday Dishes		

- [Flylady.net](#)
- [flylady.net](#)
- [HouseholdManagement101.com](#)
- *The Hidden Art of Homemaking*, Edith Schaeffer
- [Speed Cleaning by The Clean Team](#)

When you worry, you are saying in effect, "God, I just don't think I can trust You." Worry strikes a blow at the person and character of God.

John MacArthur



## Passage:

## My application:

### **Fear**

Deuteronomy 31:11-12

Psalm 23

Psalm 34:9-10

Psalm 46

Psalm 91:5-7, 10-12

Proverbs 29:25

2 Timothy 1:7

1 John 4:17-18

### **Anger**

Ephesians 4:25-42

Psalm 77:9-15

### **Anxiety**

Psalm 42-43

Isaiah 26:3

1 Corinthians 10:13

2 Corinthians 1:8-10, 10:5

Philippians 4:8

Matthew 6:33-34



Use a highlighter to mark all of the action verbs in this psalm.

Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God is living and active . . . and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

## Psalm 37

<sup>1</sup>Do not fret because of evildoers, be not envious toward wrongdoers. <sup>2</sup>For they will wither quickly like the grass and fade like the green herb. <sup>3</sup>Trust in the LORD and do good; Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. <sup>4</sup>Delight yourself in the LORD; And He will give you the desires of your heart. <sup>5</sup>Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He will do it. <sup>6</sup>He will bring forth your righteousness as the light and your judgment as the noonday. <sup>7</sup>Rest in the LORD and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who carries out wicked schemes. <sup>8</sup>Cease from anger and forsake wrath; Do not fret; it leads only to evildoing. <sup>9</sup>For evildoers will be cut off, but those who wait for the LORD, they will inherit the land. <sup>10</sup>Yet a little while and the wicked man will be no more; And you will look carefully for his place and he will not be there. <sup>11</sup>But the humble will inherit the land and will delight themselves in abundant prosperity. <sup>12</sup>The wicked plots against the righteous and gnashes at him with his teeth. <sup>13</sup>The Lord laughs at him, for He sees his day is coming. <sup>14</sup>The wicked have drawn the sword and bent their bow to cast down the afflicted and the needy, to slay those who are upright in conduct. <sup>15</sup>Their sword will enter their own heart, and their bows will be broken. <sup>16</sup>Better is the little of the righteous than the abundance of many wicked. <sup>17</sup>For the arms of the wicked will be broken, but the LORD sustains the righteous. <sup>18</sup>The LORD knows the days of the blameless, and their inheritance will be forever. <sup>19</sup>They will not be ashamed in the time of evil, and in the days of famine they will have abundance. <sup>20</sup>But the wicked will perish; And the enemies of the LORD will be like the glory of the pastures, they vanish—like smoke they vanish away. <sup>21</sup>The wicked borrows and does not pay back, but the righteous is gracious and gives. <sup>22</sup>For those blessed by Him will inherit the land, but those cursed by Him will be cut off. <sup>23</sup>The steps of a man are established by the LORD, and He delights in his way. <sup>24</sup>When he falls, he will not be hurled headlong, because the LORD is the One who holds his hand. <sup>25</sup>I have been young and now I am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his descendants begging bread. <sup>26</sup>All day long he is gracious and lends, and his descendants are a blessing. <sup>27</sup>Depart from evil and do good, so you will abide forever. <sup>28</sup>For the LORD loves justice and does not forsake His godly ones; They are preserved forever, but the descendants of the wicked will be cut off. <sup>29</sup>The righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it forever. <sup>30</sup>The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom, and his tongue speaks justice. <sup>31</sup>The law of his God is in his heart; His steps do not slip. <sup>32</sup>The wicked spies upon the righteous and seeks to kill him. <sup>33</sup>The LORD will not leave him in his hand or let him be condemned when he is judged. <sup>34</sup>Wait for the LORD and keep His way, and He will exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are cut off, you will see it. <sup>35</sup>I have seen a wicked, violent man spreading himself like a luxuriant tree in its native soil. <sup>36</sup>Then he passed away, and lo, he was no more; I sought for him, but he could not be found. <sup>37</sup>Mark the blameless man, and behold the upright; For the man of peace will have a posterity. <sup>38</sup>But transgressors will be altogether destroyed; The posterity of the wicked will be cut off. <sup>39</sup>But the salvation of the righteous is from the LORD; He is their strength in time of trouble. <sup>40</sup>The LORD helps them and delivers them; He delivers them from the wicked and saves them, because they take refuge in Him.

- *The Fear Factor: What Satan Doesn't Want You to Know*, Wayne Mack and Joshua Mack
- *Trusting God*, Jerry Bridges
- *Pleasing People*, Lou Priolo
- *Fear*, Lou Priolo
- *The Heart of Anger*, Lou Priolo
- *Anger, Anxiety and Fear*, Stuart Scott
- *Overcoming Fear, Worry, and Anxiety*, Elyse Fitzpatrick
- *With the Master in Fullness of Joy (Philippians study)*, Susan Heck
- *Will Medicine Stop the Pain?*, Elyse Fitzpatrick and Laura Hendrickson
- *Dead-End Desire: Self Pity*, Phil Moser

Love should be the silver thread that runs through all your conduct. Kindness, gentleness, long suffering, forbearance, patience, sympathy, a willingness to enter into childish troubles, a readiness to take part in childish joys, – these are the cords by which a child may be led most easily, – these are the clues you must follow if you would find the way to his heart.

J. C. Ryle



**Child:**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Child's goals:

Our goals for this child:

Favorite food:

Favorite breakfast:

Favorite lunch:

Favorite dinner:

Favorite drink:

Favorite color:

Favorite way to be loved:

Other:

**Child:**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Child's goals:

Our goals for this child:

Favorite food:

Favorite breakfast:

Favorite lunch:

Favorite dinner:

Favorite drink:

Favorite color:

Favorite way to be loved:

Other:

**Child:**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Child's goals:

Our goals for this child:

Favorite food:

Favorite breakfast:

Favorite lunch:

Favorite dinner:

Favorite drink:

Favorite color:

Favorite way to be loved:

Other:

# Love Your Children – Application

## Child:

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Child's goals:

Our goals for this child:

Favorite food:

Favorite breakfast:

Favorite lunch:

Favorite dinner:

Favorite drink:

Favorite color:

Favorite way to be loved:

Other:

## Child:

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Child's goals:

Our goals for this child:

Favorite food:

Favorite breakfast:

Favorite lunch:

Favorite dinner:

Favorite drink:

Favorite color:

Favorite way to be loved:

Other:

## Child:

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Child's goals:

Our goals for this child:

Favorite food:

Favorite breakfast:

Favorite lunch:

Favorite dinner:

Favorite drink:

Favorite color:

Favorite way to be loved:

Other:

- *Setting Their Hope in God: Biblical Intercession for Your Children*, Andrew Case
- Deuteronomy 6:5–9
- Proverbs 6:20–23
- Ephesians 6:1–4
- *Shepherding a Child’s Heart*, Tedd Tripp
- *Duties of Parents*, J. C. Ryle
- *Parenting for Life*, Grace Community Church
- *Wise Words for Moms*, Ginger Hubbard
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- *The Heart of Anger*, Lou Priolo
- *Selfishness*, Lou Priolo
- *Teach Them Diligently*, Lou Priolo
- *Age of Opportunity*, Paul David Tripp
- *War of Words*, Paul David Tripp
- *Disciplines of a Godly Family*, R. Kent Hughes
- *Everyday Talk*, John Younts
- *What the Bible Says About Parenting*, John MacArthur

We cannot add time; we can only exercise stewardship over the time we are given.

Albert Mohler



# My Schedule

Priorities		





- *Home Management: Plain and Simple*, Kim Brenneman
- *Managers of Their Homes*, Steven & Teri Maxwell
- *Taking Back Time*, Phil Moser
- *Do More Better* , Tim Challies
- *Crazy Busy*, Kevin DeYoung

But if you do not take trouble with your children when they are young, they will give you trouble when they are old. Choose which you prefer.

J. C. Ryle



## How-To

### Common Unbiblical Parenting Methods

#### Put Off

Counting to 3

Threatening and not following through

Spanking in anger

### Teaching Obedience

#### Put On

**First-time obedience.** If my children weren't hearing me or we were in a place where talking wasn't a choice I would snap my fingers. My teenagers still turn to look when I snap. If you train your kids to obey after you say "3" or "2.5" then you've trained them in third-time obedience, not first. The moment they don't obey the first time you are up and moving to deal with the lack of obedience (Eph 6:1).

**Consistency in parenting** is a sign of your own self-control, a fruit of the Spirit! Threatening without following through only hardens your child's heart to obedience. As much as is humanly possible, and perhaps with the use of phone alerts or writing it on a notepad, follow through with your promises both to bless and discipline. This does not mean that you never show grace. This doesn't mean that you never allow a child to appeal. It does mean though, that you are mindful of your own weakness towards being consistent (or harshly unbending), and that there are times you may be exasperating your children by always changing your mind and not following through.

**Disciplining in love.** Spanking is not intended for you to exact vengeance for a transgression against you. We *must* realize that all sin is against God; we are just middlemen. We are called to shepherd, train, and counsel. Would those words describe your corporal punishment? *Do* spank for rebellion, disrespect, and safety infractions, but always wait until you can shepherd their heart and not vent your anger. Faithfully use proper communication, restoration and prayer in these interactions (Eph 4:26). (See resources for helps.)

There are really two major obstacles all parents face in teaching their children to obey: not only is the world they live in corrupt, but they themselves are sinful creatures too. They face a difficult struggle both inside and outside.

John MacArthur

Children have a heart problem. They are constitutionally sinful. Like their parents, and like the rest of the Adamic race, they are fallen. What they need most are regenerate hearts. This is the most fundamental issue in parenting. It's not ultimately about behavior; it's all about the child's heart.

John MacArthur

This Job has been given to me to do. Therefore it is an offering I may make to God. Therefore, it is to be done gladly, if it is done for Him. Here, not somewhere else, I may learn God's way. In this job, not in some other, God looks for faithfulness.

Elisabeth Elliot

## Common Unbiblical Parenting Methods

### Put Off

Ignoring bad behavior

Being hypocritical

Micromanaging

Bribing

“Because I said so”

## Teaching Obedience

### Put On

**Training for righteousness.** There is no place for ignoring sin in God's economy. We must teach our kids that God is both loving and just. Hebrews 12 tells us that discipline is love and ignoring discipline is hate. Consider every sin an opportunity to train and teach your children about their heart and about God's! It is EASY and convenient at times to not train and teach your kids. It is HARD to be faithful. God doesn't call us to ease as parents. He calls us to nurture and admonish (cf. Eph 6:4).

**Being an example.** Practice what you preach, dad and mom. And when your kids point out your hypocrisy, humbly admit it. Sure, there are things adults may do that children may not, but not sin and evil. Also seek to be the same parent in public that you are in private. Live a life of humble heart obedience to all of the Scripture and call your kids to God's Word (Matt 7:5).

**Say “yes” as much as you can.** “No” should have a good reason. Recognize that God holds your child's life in His hand. You do not really have control. Let them learn cause and effect when you can and principles of sowing and reaping. Use “yes” early on. There are indeed so many “no's” we have to say, so try to find opportunities to say “yes.” (Like when training toddlers on what they can and can't touch: “yes cupboard,” “yes ball,” “no cupboard,” “no glass ball,” etc.) (Prov 3:5-7).

**Rewarding.** Be inconsistent in rewarding so that rewards aren't expected for doing what is right, but sometimes a sweet reward. Your children must obey because God commands them to, not because you give a reward (Ps 26:10).

**Because God said so!** Ephesians 6:1 and Colossians 3:20 give parents their authority. Apart from God's decree, we don't hold any authority: “Son, you need to obey me right now, because God tells you to obey me right now.”

## Common Unbiblical Parenting Methods

### Put Off

Constantly entertaining

Not letting your child get enough rest

Not thinking how situations will play out

Allowing whining, fussing, throwing

## Teaching Obedience

### Put On

#### **Educate through play and self-entertainment.**

Allow children opportunities to succeed and fail in real-life situations and train in those opportunities. Why do parents constantly entertain? Somehow parents think it is easier to entertain their kids than to teach them to entertain themselves. If you teach your child self-control, you will not need to be the only one entertaining them (or an electronic device). Provide different areas to play in your home and rotate toys so they don't have a giant pile of a "boring" mess (Eph 6:4).

**Schedule, order and sleep.** Schedule, order and sleep contribute greatly to proper behavior (self-control). Because parents are not giving their kids naps or putting them to bed anymore, our generation has fatigued kids to the point that we have added to their difficulty in focusing and obeying.

**Think ahead of your child's possible actions** (e.g., climbing on your tables = climbing on other people's tables; not listening to your "come" = running into street and harm; grabbing your glasses, hair, or jewelry = grabbing other people's glasses, hair, or jewelry. Allowing your child to rip up spare paper = ripping up books and important papers. Think about how you are training your child to be a blessing everywhere you go (Prov 2:7).

**Teach manners early on.** A wise way to do this is to teach your baby sign language early on: "please, more and thank you." If your baby can communicate with you, he will have less of a desire to whine. Another helpful idea is to train your child to put "hands together for self-control." This is useful when you drop them off for class and they're fussing, in the store, and when they are getting aggressive toward others or with toys (Prov 16:13).

If we allow our children to decide if, how, and when they will obey us, we're effectively putting them in the driver's seat, which makes our job harder and their lives more stressful.

Pam Forster

(Proverbs 13:1) Note the foolish woman: her idleness, waste, love of pleasure, lack of all forethought and care. She allows her children to do just as they please; their souls are neglected, and their happiness ruined. We see her house torn down in confusion. It would have been a sad result if this had been done by an enemy. But this is the doing, or undoing, of her own hands.

Charles Bridges

## Common Unbiblical Parenting Methods

### Put Off

Embarrassing them

Inconsistency

Procrastination

## Teaching Obedience

### Put On

**Discipline in private or quietly in public.** You will not get to the heart of your child when he is distracted thinking about how everyone is hearing you go off on them. Loving your child includes being kind as per 1 Corinthians 13:4. Kindness calls for you to correct your child in private, by taking them aside or speaking quietly in their ear in public. They may scream in public but you certainly don't need to!

**Be consistently consistent.** Few things in life are more frustrating than inconsistency. Idle threats or no follow-through; hard rules one day and easy softness the next. Having one standard one day and another one tomorrow. Imagine if you had a boss and from day to day you never knew if you would please him or upset him. One day you might do a little thing and get giant praise and another day mess one little thing up and get a verbal explosion. Children need the safety of knowing where the fences are placed around them. Be consistent in your attitude (predictably cheerful), your words, your rules, your consequences.

**Are you a mom of your word.** Are you a mom of your word? Do you do what you say and say what you mean? Do you keep your promises? Do you serve others in a timely way? Can your kids depend on you to help them with their needs or do you let them down a lot because you put off till tomorrow what should have been done today? Procrastination as a parent leads to children who can't trust their parents. Build their trust, mama. Proverbs 31 says that the heart of a husband trusts in his excellent wife. Be that godly, dependable, hardworking excellent wife and mother.

Are you prone to commit any of the above errors? What do you think the root cause is?

### How a Parent May Exasperate Their Child

Exasperate means "to excite the anger of, to enrage, to cause irritation or annoyance." God directly commands parents to avoid sinning against their children in this way.

Colossians 3:21 says, "Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart." Carefully work through each principle below and consider if you are guilty of exasperating your child(ren). You must confess and seek the Holy Spirit's help to put off these sins and

to put on godliness and agape love.

How do you know if you are exasperating your children? Lou Priolo, John MacArthur, and other pastors have compiled some lists of primary ways parents may slip into this sin:

1. Lacking marital harmony
2. Parents' reversal of roles
3. Maintaining a child-centered home
4. Modeling sinful anger
5. Habitually disciplining while angry
6. Scolding/Cruel or harsh words
7. Mocking your child/Any verbal abuse
8. Ridiculing or name-calling
9. Excessive or harsh discipline
10. Physical abuse
11. Discouragement
12. Constantly finding fault
13. Not praising or encouraging your kids
14. Not making time to just talk
15. Failure to listen well
16. Not listening to your child's opinion or side of the story
17. Lack of appreciation, respect, or approval
18. Not admitting wrong or asking forgiveness
19. Comparing them to others
20. Inconsistent discipline/Lack of standards
21. Holding double standards between children
22. Blatant hypocrisy
23. Being legalistic
24. Overprotection
25. Not showing affection
26. Using love as a reward or tool
27. Not sacrificing, causing feelings of being unwanted /intrusion
28. Failing to keep your promises
29. Chastening in front of others
30. Favoritism
31. Not allowing enough freedoms
32. Allowing too much freedom
33. Unrealistic expectations/pushing achievement beyond reasonable bounds
34. Disciplining exhausted children when you've kept them up
35. Child training with worldly methods

He who sins before a child,  
sins double.

Old proverb quoted by J.C.  
Ryle

“Do not provoke your children to anger.” That is the warning of Ephesians 6:4.



## From the previous list:

1. In what ways do you see children in our generation express anger provoked by their parents?

2. In what ways are you guilty of provoking your own children to anger?

The second part of Paul’s command to parents is positive. He says, “Bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” Put off the ways you have been exasperating your children and put on the positive training character traits of agape love, consistency, availability, right priorities, integrity, respect, personal obedience to God and contentment.

3. Positive traits my children need proactive training in:

4. When will I work on this proactive instruction?

If we measure our success as parents solely by what our children become, there is no inviolable guarantee in Scripture that we will experience absolute success on those terms. . . . The true measure of success for Christian parents is the parents’ own character. To the degree that we have followed God’s design for parenting, we have succeeded as parents before God.

John MacArthur

- Deuteronomy 6:5–9
- Proverbs 6:20–23
- Ephesians 6:1–4
- *Shepherding a Child’s Heart*, Tedd Tripp
- *Duties of Parents*, J. C. Ryle
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