

## How to Parent in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Introduction:

### **Parenting with a difference NEC Camp Meeting Nuggets 2023 -**

As a Christian parent, raising our children in today's world can be overwhelming. It can feel like everything is getting more complicated and corrupted and that our children will have to fight through to stay close to Christ. However, the Bible gives us direct instructions on parenting God's way, thus making the journey easier.

- **And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.” – Deuteronomy 6:6–7.**
  
- **“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” – Ephesians 6:4.**

Our Experience –dad and step mum

- No perfect parents...
- What we will share is only a 10 nuggets
- Each slide can be a whole workshop

## 8 Tips On Raising Godly Children In A Changing World

- 1. **Children should be taught to be confident in themselves: ...**

Building self-esteem is crucial among our children - They need to know they are God's creation.

When your values begin with God, they begin inside of you. We cannot generate Qualities of the soul they come from God. He puts them inside of us. They come as a natural result of our relationship with God. The more we spend time in the study of His word and through prayer, allow the Holy Spirit to speak to our minds , the more we resemble him. The better we know Him, the more like Him we become. Our character will reflect our friendship with Him. This is the most important thing to communicate to your children.

Sometimes it's easy to notice when kids seem to feel good about themselves — and when they don't. We often describe this idea of feeling good about ourselves as “self-esteem.”

Kids with self-esteem:

- feel liked and accepted
- feel confident
- feel proud of what they can do
- think good things about themselves
- believe in themselves

Kids with low self-esteem:

- are self-critical and hard on themselves
- feel they're not as good as other kids
- think of the times they fail rather than when they succeed
- lack confidence
- doubt they can do things well
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### **Why Self-Esteem Matters**

- Kids who feel good about themselves have the confidence to try new things. They are more likely to try their best. They feel proud of what they can

n do. Self-esteem helps kids cope with mistakes. It helps kids try again, even if they fail at first. As a result, self-esteem helps kids do better at school, at home, and with friends.

- **2. Teach them to value others: ...**

We must teach our children to love and respect others and learn to treat people how they would want to be treated themselves. The golden rule is the essence of respect. It applies both to friends and nonfriends, people you love and people you have a hard time with, family members and strangers.

It's a simple question for every situation we all need to ask.

How would I like to be treated if I were that person?

Remember, very young children are just learning to understand how people feel. They are beginning to experience empathy. They need lots of practice thinking about how others feel before they will be able to apply the golden rule. Whereas primary-age children will understand better, because they are older.

The value of respect is across all ages and should be practised by all

- **3. Teach them that they are called to lead and not to follow: ...**

Scripture is clear that in the last days, God wants to pour His Spirit out upon the children (Acts 2:16-18)

**16** But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

**17** And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

**18** And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

For this to happen the way God wants it to, we adults must be aware of what God is doing among our Children. We have got to change our thinking from "I'm the teacher, and you Children are the students, so sit down, don't move, and don't talk." We've got to see our Children the way God does - as leaders.

He says, "**A little child shall lead them**" (Isa. 11:6).

### **Developing Leadership Gifts**

It doesn't take long to discover which children have leadership gifts: the leaders are the kids who are always competing for the spotlight. Leaders, whether they're two or 82, want to lead and they want someone to follow them. They don't always care who is following them or where they're going, they just have something in them that compels them to lead. We need to learn to let them develop those leadership gifts.

When the world recognises a child with a gift, they do something about it. When parents see a child who has musical talent or one who can play basketball, they'll spend thousands of dollars to send that child to a specialised camp to develop that gift. But in the church, we've often ignored leadership gifts in our children. Worse, we've sometimes chased the leaders away, because strong-willed children are just too hard to deal with.

### **God Uses the Strong-Willed**

If you look in the Bible, you'll often find that the people who did the most for God were strong-willed. Moses was strong-willed. He had to be - he didn't get a lot of encouragement. Paul was very strong-willed. As the apostle to the Gentiles, he didn't have a whole lot of people patting him on the back. When you get around people with an apostolic call on their life, you'll find they are also strong-willed people. They have to be in order to obey God.

My point is this: there are strong-willed kids in our families and classrooms who are leaders. Some adults see these young leaders as their enemies. We don't want them around because it makes it more difficult for us. Followers are much easier to deal with.

Yet, we have a responsibility to develop those with leadership gifts, to train them, and to let them lead. That doesn't mean you let them take over. You can't say, "OK, you guys are in charge," and walk out. No, we have to disciple them and develop those leadership gifts. Children learn to be a leader by following. For strong-willed people especially, the first step in becoming a leader is, "Are

you willing to submit your gift to someone else?"

As teachers and parents, we need to get the leaders on our side. If we want the group to flow with God, we need their help. The rest of the kids need to see kids yielding to God. Whoever the peer leaders are, we need to have them pulling with us, not against us. You can do that in a lot of different ways, but it begins with convincing them you like them!

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- **4. Set boundaries very early in their lives: ...**
- In his book *Making Children Mind Without Losing Yours*, Dr. Kevin Leman writes: “The permissive parent essentially says, ‘Oh, do your own thing. Whatever you want is OK.’ My years of counseling parents and children have shown me that in a permissive environment, kids rebel. They rebel because they feel anger and hatred toward their parents for a lack of guidelines and limit setting.”
- So true. A very important way to show your children love is to have clear, defined limitations for them. Your kids want guidelines for their lives that are reliably enforced. You are the one who creates a safe environment for them. Setting boundaries is an important piece of parenting. It doesn’t mean they won’t push your boundaries, they will. It is a part of their learning process and they may even be upset when you uphold certain boundaries, but they will also feel safe and secure at the same time. Here are 10 ways to establish clear boundaries for your children.
- **1. Be trustworthy**
- Your children need to know that they can count on you. When you fail to back up your words with action your words will cease to mean anything. Your discipline and boundary setting will become hollow.
- **2. Less is more**
- Follow the guideline of a special education teacher we know. “Five rules respected 100% of the time are better than 20 rules with haphazard compliance.”
- **3. Be precise**
- Miscommunication is not the way to establish a positive environment. Effective communication is necessary. Ask them to repeat back to you

what they heard you say to verify it's understood. It pays to make sure everyone is on the same page.

- **4. Involve the kids in boundary setting**

- Have a family meeting. Family communication gets everyone involved in setting the boundaries. When children share ownership of the rules, they're more invested.

- **5. Draw up a contract**

- Once the "Family Ten-Commandments" have been established, write up a document that everyone will sign.

- **6. Post the rules**

- Post copies of the contract in the kitchen and in each bedroom. Remember, these are not restrictions so much as rules to live by.

- **7. Recognize appropriate behavior**

- Teachers refer to this as, "Catch 'em when things are going well." Too many of us come down on violations like a ton of bricks and never pay attention to what's going well. If it's attention they're after, they'll get it one way or the other.

- **8. Avoid labeling children as "good" and "bad"**

- Children—and adults—behave in ways that are acceptable and in ways that are unacceptable. Labeling a child as "bad" will do little to improve behavior and a lot to create a negative self-image.

- **9. NEVER undermine the other parent**

- "Good-cop, bad-cop" is not a useful game at home. "Don't tell your mum!" suggests you and your wife are divided. [Parents must have each other's backs.](#) It's another way to be consistent.

- **10. Employ “natural consequences” when possible**
  - When raising teenagers, natural consequences just make more sense. For younger children, this helps associate negative outcomes with specific behavior.
  - If a room is not cleaned as instructed, [missing a fun activity while cleaning the room is less a punishment and more of a consequence.](#)
  - Inappropriate talk? Instead of a spanking try having the child look up ten appropriate words in the dictionary and copy them all down, including definitions, etymology (origin of the word), etc.
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- **5. Discipline (Punitive and Non-Punitive): ...**

The Bible has a wealth of knowledge about parenting God’s way, and how we are to raise our children for Christ. The Bible teaches us in

Proverbs 22:6 to **“Train them up in the way they should go and when they are old they won’t depart from it.”**

I have seen this in so many situations when children may go off on the wrong path but those raised in Christ, always come back to the truth. **The Bible instructs us on the importance of discipline** (Proverbs 12:1) and teaching our children about what is most important in this life. It teaches them how to treat someone who doesn’t treat them well (Luke 6:31) and gives them guidance in hard situations (Joshua 1:9).

Truly everything we need to know, from what lessons and values to teach our children, how to train them and raise them to be men and women of God, is all found in God’s word. As parents, we tend to get [stressed and overwhelmed](#) rather than realising we have the answers for every parenting situation in the Bible. We tend to look for answers on parenting God’s way everywhere but, there.

- **6. Model what you want them to learn**

*Want your kids to listen and behave well? **Model the behavior you want to see in your child.** Here's why it's the most effective technique.*

Let's say you had to choose between two options. The first is giving your child advice but no action. The second is [not saying anything](#) but *doing* what you want her to do.

Hands down, you should choose the latter.

You see, modeling is the best teaching method. It's not enough to tell her about important values and [responsibilities](#). You have to *show* her through your actions.

Model appropriate behavior and she can understand that these expectations apply to everyone, Children *and* adults. Being kind and [reading every day](#) aren't only for her—even the adults in her life live by these principles and values.

Modeling behavior is also more effective than telling her what to do. Yes, she likely needs verbal guidance, but seeing you behave the same way sends a stronger message.

Keep in mind though, this isn't a call to be The Perfect Parent. You'll lose your temper out of frustration and make huge mistakes that she might even copy for herself. But the most effective way to teach your child is to follow those lessons yourself.

This means no matter what the culture says, we are to teach our children to choose God's ways. No matter if your kids are little or big, ask God to show you the areas where you can model faith better for a relationship with God.

Faith. It is the essence of how I navigate the world. Faith teaches me what the world cannot. Faith is what binds up my heart and faith is what keeps my eyes focused on God. My greatest desire is to equip my children with faith in order to handle whatever life throws at them.



So how do I handle this enormous task to give them the foundation of handling the highs and lows of life? The answer is modeling my relationship with God.

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I want my children to know His Word is living and active, it judges the hearts of men, and acts as a compass.

And I want them to understand there is something inappropriate about using secular science to judge the claims of the Bible when we must believe it to be true simply because it is God's Word.

And I also want them to know it is not to be used as a weapon against things they don't understand, nor is it used to condemn or judge but it is to be used as a living, breathing, active compass of Christ-centered living. *A way to love others through relationship with Jesus.*

*"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come" (John 16:13).*

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Thankfully the Word of God itself gives us an understanding on how to best apply it in our everyday life. The scriptures are clear that it is impossible to obey God’s commands without the grace of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit:

*“I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).*

### **3. Faith Is More Than Just Rules — It’s a Relationship**

With many doctrines, belief systems, and symbolic traditions encompassed under the word, Christianity, it paints God to be an unrelenting task master with a list of legalistic rules.

I want my kids to know faith isn’t about rules, I want them to experience God’s love and what it’s like to have a relationship with Jesus.

Being loved by Christ motivates me to want to do what God asks through His Word, to live life for Christ and it’s what will motivate them to pursue God’s heart.

If my children think the mission of Christ is just to follow the rules and laws legalistically, this is incorrect, then we’re going about faith the wrong way. God wants to write His laws upon our hearts, so it’s much more than following a set of tick box rules and commands it instead is a lifestyle change.

Rather than follow tick box letter of the law approach, God sent His Son to show His love for us and build a bridge to His saving grace. Because of Christ, Christianity is about a personal relationship. It is about transforming us from within.

### **4. Faith Is an Action**

Faith is love in action. Faith is being the hands and feet of Jesus. It’s seeing a need in our community and taking action when the Holy Spirit prompts.

Our faith shows itself in things we say and do and in the way we treat other people.

- *Talk is cheap.*
- *Actions speak louder than words.*
- *You have to be willing to put your money where your mouth is.*
- *You can talk the talk, but can you walk the walk?*

These phrases remind us there is a difference between intention and action.

Faith isn't just a warm, fuzzy feeling — faith means being Christ's hands and feet in action. It's love in action. I don't want my children to become disillusioned with the church or the years Jesus spent in ministry by feeding and clothing the poor.

Jesus spent more time in relationship with society's rejects than He did with His fellow peers at the synagogue. I to teach my kids about "feeding his lambs," I want my kids to be *others-centered* instead of *self-centered*. It's important to remember that love is primarily an action word in the Bible, not an emotion.

*Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails (1 Corinthians 13).*

## 5. Faith in Christ Means You Have a Purpose

In a world where parents teach their kids to be anything they want — I want my children to know the true meaning of [Jeremiah 29:11-13](#) and [Psalm 139](#). I want them to discover the path and life God has planned and purposed for them.

I want my children to know they were created for a God-appointed task — born with unique talents and destined to fulfill a purpose no one else can do. I want them to seek God's face to establish their future.

I want them to intimately understand [Ephesians 2:10](#) of being God's masterpiece. The ultimate purpose and meaning of life are found in Jesus Christ! Our first and foremost priority is to seek God's Kingdom and His righteousness above all else ([Matthew 6:33](#)).

## 6. Faith Is Keeping Jesus as the Target

Today's fad will be swept up in yesterday's news, but God is the same as He was yesterday as He will be tomorrow. I want my kids to keep their eyes on Jesus no matter how crazy and anti-Jesus this world becomes.

*Gird your sword on your side, you mighty one; clothe yourself with splendor and majesty. In your majesty ride forth victoriously in the cause of truth, humility and justice; let your right hand achieve awesome deeds. Let your sharp arrows pierce the hearts of the king's enemies; let the nations fall*

*beneath your feet. Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom* ([Psalm 45:3-6](#)).

This passage contains the statement about God's sharp arrows, and it references us. God wants us to abide in faith, hope, and love forever keeping Jesus as the target in our words, actions, and in our hearts.

It's not just about bringing Jesus into the center of our prayers, church, or Bible studies. It's about keeping Jesus at the center of our relationships, in our words, our thoughts, and our actions.

It's about keeping our focus on Christ in the mundane moments, hanging out with friends, going shopping, watching movies, etc.

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This means no matter what the culture says, we are to teach our children to choose God's ways. [Joshua 25:15](#) says, "Choose for yourselves today whom you will serve ... but [as for me and my house](#), we will serve the Lord."

No matter if your kids are little or big, ask God to show you the areas where you can model faith better. Ask him how to help grow your kids' relationship with God.

Make every effort to line your actions up with the words you speak be filled with the Fruit of the Spirit found in [Galatians 5:22-23](#). So, how do we begin today? Let's start by observing our faith and what we model to our children!

## **7. Build a safe village around them:**

It takes a village to raise a child. Teach them how to avoid inappropriate touches from anyone and to speak up if it ever happens. Let them know that their bodies are theirs and that their body is a temple of God.

#### **8. Model what you want them to learn:**

Don't be different from what you are trying to teach them. This is because children tend to mirror what they see, rather than listen to what you tell them. So it is important for parents to walk your talk. To truly raise godly children, you must exhibit the right values. Most importantly, let them see you pray, and learn what love is from how you treat people.