

Reaching Your Child's Heart

High Pointe Equipping Seminar 2026 Review Sessions

Session 1:

The Parent-Directed Home vs. The Child-Centered Home

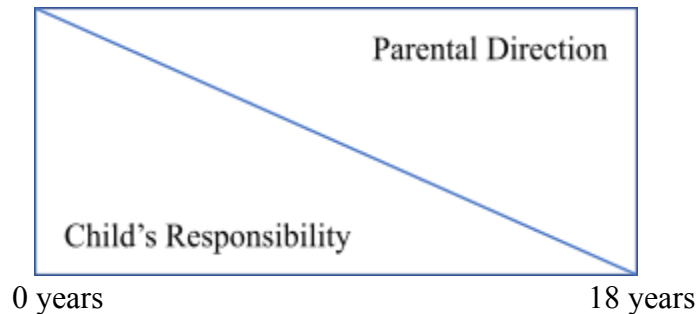
Principle: *If we are to raise our children in a way that honors God, parental direction should naturally give way to personal responsibility as our children mature.*

The Purpose of Faithful Parenting (Genesis 1:26-28)

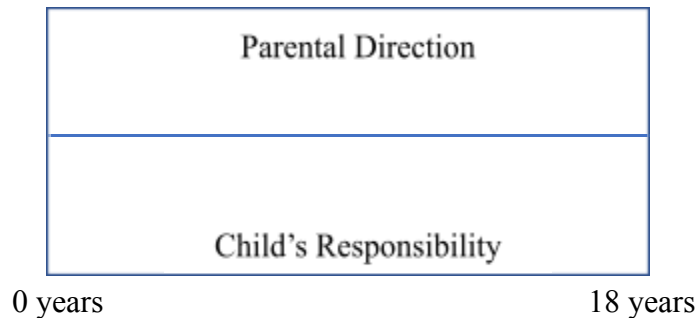
- Adam & Eve's original task (Genesis 1:26-28)
- The Problem of Sin (Genesis 3 & 4)
- The unchanged purpose (Malachi 2:15-16)
- Christian Parenting (Ephesians 6:1-4)

The Parent-Directed Home vs. The Child-Centered Home

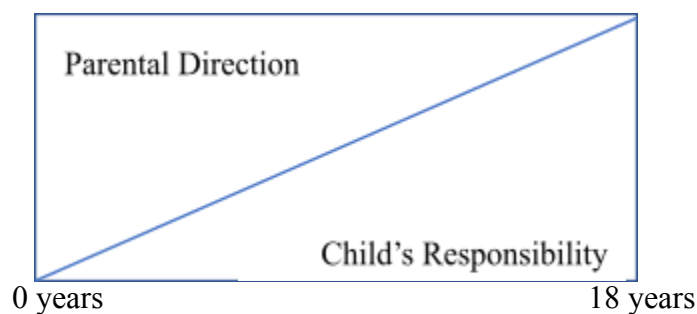
- The Child-Centered Home



- The Democratically Run Home



- The Parent-Directed Home



Assessing Our Parenting

“You will either do hard now or do hard later.
But the longer you wait to do hard, the harder it will be.”

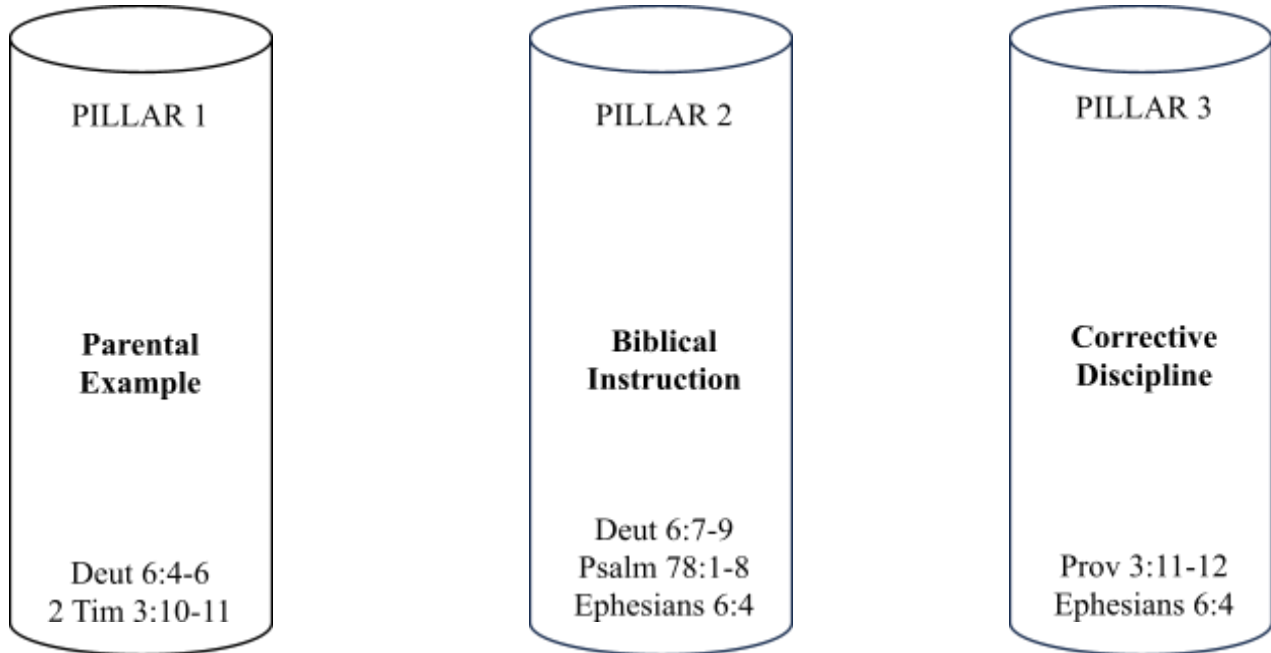
1. What is your goal in parenting? Not your parenting goals but your aim, your desire for your children?
2. What are some of the things that frustrate you about parenting?
3. What are some ways we might provoke our children to anger or frustration?
4. How do you presently communicate your expectations to your children?
 - In a good, healthy manner?
 - Threats or Repetition?
 - Negotiation or Bribery?
 - You Don't?
5. Write down some of the areas you struggle with in your parenting (Take a few minutes to list your personal struggles as a parent. After a few minutes, get with your spouse or a friend and discuss your list):
6. What are some obstacles to addressing these problems (Together with your spouse or friend, discuss the obstacles you see to addressing these problems?)?

Assessing Our Rhythms at Home

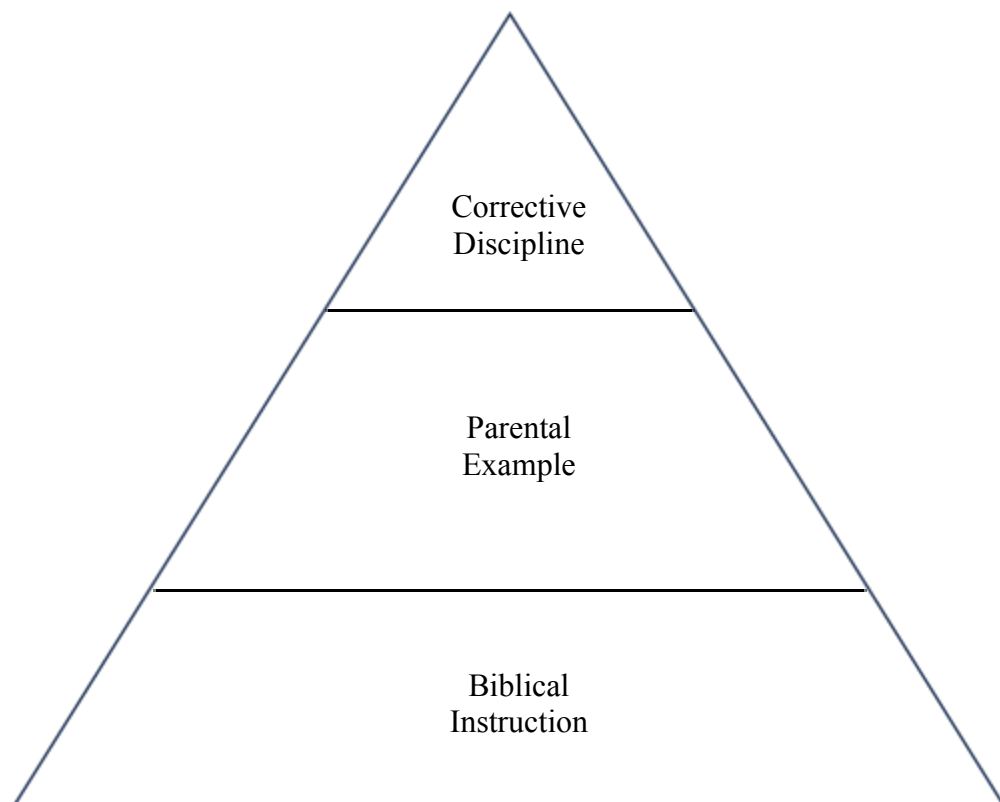
7. What time do you go to bed?
 - Getting ready for your day starts the night before.
 - Describe your bedtime routine - for your children, for you, for your spouse:
 - Is your bedtime routine(s) consistent?
 - Are you getting enough sleep each night?
 - Are your children getting enough sleep each night?
 - What changes might you need to make to have a healthy, consistent evening/bedtime routine so that you get enough sleep?
8. What time do you get up?
 - How you prepare for your day will impact how your day goes.
 - Describe your morning routine - for you, your spouse, your children:
 - Do you have enough time to get ready for your day?
 - ◆ Personal Devotions
 - ◆ Getting Ready for Your Day
 - ◆ Getting Your Children Ready for Their Day
 - What changes might you need to make to have enough time for yourself in the morning and to help your children get ready for their day?
9. Mealtimes (Feedings)
 - Describe what happens during mealtimes.
 - How might you better use mealtimes to promote family identity and unity?
10. Free time
 - Describe what your children do during their free time?
 - How might you direct your children so that their free time is healthy and productive?

The Three Pillars of Biblical Parenting

We refer to these three aspects of faithful parenting as pillars because, according to Scripture, all three are necessary to endure faithfully in Christian parenting.



While all three pillars are necessary, they build on one another in the following way. So, that is how we will consider them as we proceed:



Pillar 1: The Power of Parental Example

Principle: *If we are to raise our children in a way that honors God, the truths of the gospel must, first, be on our hearts and, second, be lived out before our children.*

What the Bible Says

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.

(Moses preparing the second generation of Israel to enter the land, Deuteronomy 6:4-6)

You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me...

(The apostle Paul writing to Timothy, his son in the faith, 2 Timothy 3:10-11)

Ways teach. They form the primary classrooms of our learning. For better or worse, we learn to see the world and present ourselves in it for witness, not just from creedal statements we learn in class but also from relational mentoring with those with whom we do life (Proverbs 13:20; 22:24-25).

(Zack Eswine, “The Imperfect Pastor”)

Assessing Our Example in the Home

1. What kinds of examples did you have growing up? Which examples were the most encouraging to you? Why?
2. Now, ask yourself, “What are my children learning simply by observing me?”
 - About your devotion to Jesus, Scripture, the church
 - About authority - How you respond to authority, how you exercise your authority
 - About love - For your spouse, your children, your extended family, Christians, neighbors
 - About truth, suffering, consequences of your decisions

Working It Out Together

3. What does the Bible say about godly example?
 - Read 2 Timothy 3:10-17
 - We are teaching our children about God, authority, love by the way we live our lives.
 - A godly example is the aroma of our home.
4. What are some areas in which you need to grow as you consider being a godly example before your children?

5. Is it possible that you need to ask forgiveness from one or more of your children for being a bad example in a particular area? What does repentance look like in that situation?
6. What are some steps you will take beginning today, to live in the power of the Spirit, in obedience to God's Word, in order to live as a godly example to your children?

Session 2

Pillar 2 | The Importance of Biblical Instruction

Principle: *If we are to raise our children in a way that honors God, we must teach them the truths of the gospel from God's Word, using biblical methods to reach biblical goals.*

What the Bible Says

And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. And 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. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

(Moses preparing the second generation of Israel to enter the land, Deuteronomy 6:4-6)

Fathers do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

(The apostle Paul writing to the church in Ephesus, Ephesians 6:4)

Assessing Our Biblical Instruction

1. What are some steps you are currently taking to instruct your children in the Lord?
2. What are some ways you desire to grow in offering biblical instruction to your children?

Working It Out Together

3. What does the Bible say is our responsibility as parents to instruct our children in the ways of the Lord?
 - Read Psalm 78:1-8
 - According to vv.1-3, what must we tell our children?
 - Why must the Bible serve as the foundational text for raising our children (see vv.4-5)?
 - What should be our aim in biblical instruction (see vv.6-8)?
4. The Purpose of Biblical Instruction (Psalm 78:6-8) | that our children may capture a glorious vision of our God and set their hope in him.
 - That means the content of our (positive) instruction is the Word of God.
 - We are parenting for the long haul, not the short-term.
5. A Plan for Biblical Instruction
 - Scripture: Bible reading, Bible books, the gathered assembly, children's ministry
 - Prayer: Teach your children as you pray and invite them to pray when they are able
 - Doctrine: Catechism, Conversations, Creeds and Confessions, Age-appropriate books
 - History: the Bible, Biographies, History books, Field Trips
 - Literature: some examples: *Pilgrim's Progress*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *The Hobbit*

6. Some Means for Biblical Instruction
 - Teach through the regular routine
 - Teach through games
 - Teach in corporate worship
 - Teach through song
 - Teach through direct instruction
 - Teach them what God expects.
 - Teach them what you want them to do, what you expect.
 - Teach them why they fail to obey.
 - Teach them the gospel.
7. If you've not formed a regular habit of biblical instruction, what are some of the first steps you can take?
8. HOMEWORK: Put together an age-appropriate plan for biblical instruction in your home.

Session 3

Pillar 3 | The Necessity of Corrective Discipline

Principle: *If we are to raise our children in a way that honors God, we must consistently apply biblical discipline, which requires both positive instruction and corrective discipline.*

What the Bible Says

My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you...My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline or be weary of his reproof, for the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.
(Solomon writing to his sons, Proverbs 3:1, 11-12)

Assessing Our Hearts Toward Corrective Discipline

1. How was correction practiced in your home growing up? How did that impact you as a child? As an adult? How does it inform your parenting?
2. Are you characterized more by positive instruction or corrective discipline? Can you identify why?
3. Are you a threatening/repeating parent?
 - Do you find yourself saying things like, "If you don't do your chores, you're grounded for a week!" Or, "How many times do I have to tell you to clean your room?"
4. Are you a negotiating or bribing parent?
 - Do you find yourself saying things like, "If you finish your homework, you can play video games for an hour."
5. Are you a passive parent?
 - Do you find yourself saying things like, "I wish you'd keep your room clean, but it's up to you." Or, "When I was your age... (passive-aggressive)."
6. What is corrective discipline, and how do you believe it should be worked out in the home?
7. What is your view of physical chastisement (spanking)? Why?

Working It Out Together

8. The Bible actually says a lot concerning corrective discipline. Proverbs is helpful because it exposes us to a variety of ways of corrective discipline.
 - Read Proverbs 3:1-12
 - Notice how the writer begins. What does he prioritize in vv.1-4?
 - How do vv.5-10 help us understand the kind of obedience we are seeking?
 - What is moralism, and why is it bad?

- How do vv.5-10 warn us against the danger of moralism?
 - How do vv.5-10 inform our goal in faithful parenting?
9. How does understanding the doctrine of Original (Inherited) Sin inform our parenting (see v.3)?
10. How does the writer describe corrective discipline and the parent's motivation for it (see vv.11-12)?
- What is your primary motivation for practicing corrective discipline?
 - How do you need to renew your thinking about corrective discipline?

The Practice of Corrective Discipline

11. Some practical wisdom from the Proverbs:
- **Prioritize Positive Instruction (Proverbs 3:1-4)** | The bulk of our parenting should be positive instruction.
 - Principle 1: Teach what appropriate behavior is.
 - Principle 2: Teach what inappropriate behavior is.
 - Principle 3: Encourage obedience by highlighting the blessings of obedience.
 - Principle 4: Encourage obedience by pointing out the dangers of sin (3:27-35).
 - **Shepherd their Hearts (Proverbs 3:5-10)** | We don't merely want compliant children. We want to reach their hearts. We want them to obey from the heart: immediately, completely, joyfully.
 - True obedience flows from the heart (3:5-7).
 - True obedience produces good fruit (3:8-10).
 - **Understand the Problem of Inherited Sin (3:3)**
 - Our children's greatest need is not perfect parents.
 - Their greatest need is the perfect Savior who gives new hearts.
 - So, our homes must be gospel homes.
 - **Practice Corrective Discipline (3:11-12)** | Because our young children have hard hearts, until they come to Christ by faith, we function in a similar role as the Law in the old covenant.
 - Like old covenant Israel, our children cannot obey because they have hard hearts.
 - God gave them the Law to expose their sin and point them to their Savior.
 - That is the place of our positive instruction.

- That is the reason for corrective discipline (note the examples in Proverbs).
 - ♦ Level 1 | Gentle Exhortation (Proverbs 1:10-11, 15-16)
 - ♦ Level 2 | Gentle Rebuke (Proverbs 3:12; 9:7-8; 15:12; 19:25)
 - ♦ Level 3 | Chastisement or Corporal Punishment that does not cause harm (Proverbs 13:24; 19:18; 29:15)
 - ♣ Corporal punishment gives wisdom (29:15).
 - ♣ But it is NOT to be done in anger (remember, it is motivated by love, 3:11-12).
 - ♣ And it is ONLY to be used for:
 - ♥ Clear defiance and rebellion (10:13)
 - ♥ Foolishness, NOT childishness (22:15)
 - ♣ What might it look like?
 - ♥ Age-appropriate, non-harmful (23:13)
 - ♥ Maintains the dignity of the child (private)
 - ♥ Explains reason for chastisement
 - ♥ Explains the gospel need and hope (saving from last Day)
 - ♥ Reconciles with child and those sinned against.

12. In what ways does understanding the different levels of corrective discipline help you shepherd your children's hearts toward the path that leads to life? Which level do you need to practice? Which level are you overusing?
13. What have you learned about chastisement from our time together? How will you apply those truths in your parenting?

BONUS: Take-Home Session

Walking with Your Teen: Equipping for Wisdom and Gospel Living

Principle: *During the older years, we are equipping our children to walk in wisdom and apply the gospel for themselves.*

What the Bible Says

You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and sufferings...

(Paul writing to Timothy, 2 Timothy 3:10-11)

Introduction: The Season of Change

- There are unique challenges during the teenage years – for both parents and teens. This is a season of change, growth, and taking on more responsibility. We will need prayer and wisdom as we navigate giving away more responsibility and learn to trust the Lord to work in our children to be more responsible.

Practical Application: From Gospel Principle to Daily Practice

Here are some hands-on reminders with actionable plans for parents of teens.

- **Focus on Heart, Not Just Behavior**

Aim for heart transformation, not mere compliance. Explore motivations and values.

- Guide heart change, not just outward behavior.
- Ask deeper questions about feelings and motivations.
- See correction as an opportunity to disciple, not just discipline.

- **Be a Guide, Not a Controller**

At this stage, you are exercising an authority of counsel more and less an authority of command.

- Respect your teen's growing independence.
- Shift from giving commands to mentoring and discipleship.
- Walk alongside your teen in choices and consequences.

- **Create a Culture of Grace**

This should not be a new thing, but during this stage our children are taking on responsibility and discovering how to make decisions. They will make mistakes. They will fail.

- Make home a safe place to fail and seek forgiveness.
- Show unconditional acceptance—love is not based on performance.
- Admit your own mistakes and model repentance.

- **Prioritize Connection over Correction**

You are building relationships that will last a lifetime. Work on strengthening those relationships.

- Value small, routine moments to build trust.
- Show interest in your teen's world and activities.
- Listen more than you talk; encourage open conversation.
- Express love and support out loud.

- **Parent at a Team**

Mom and Dad, you're a team. Get on the same page and work together. If you are a single parent, remember, you are not alone. The Lord has given us spiritual parents and grandparents, brothers and sisters in the church.

- Present a united approach with your parenting partner.
- Single parents, seek out brothers and sisters in the church who share your convictions.
- Be consistent with rules and boundaries.
- Check in regularly with each other and pray together for your teen.

- **Value Daily Faithfulness**

The Christian life is about the thousands of daily steps of faithfulness. So is parenting.

- Use everyday interactions to nurture connection and character.
- Be present and affirm your teen regularly, even amid resistance.
- Find joy together and make space for making memories.

- **Trust God's work in your Teen**

God has given you everything you need to be a faithful parent. Provide a godly example. Keep pointing them to what God says in his word. And lovingly correct them. Then trust the Lord.

- Pray with and for your teen—trust God for heart change.
- Remember that heart change comes from God, not from perfection.
- Pray with and for your teen.
- Remember that faithful, imperfect effort matters; trust that God will bring growth.
- Move from “survival” to “joyful” parenting by applying gospel truth daily.

One-Week “Heart Approach” Plan

Here is a practical, take-home challenge for parents, with daily emphases:

Day	Focus	Activity Summary
1	Strengthen Relationship	Intentional time together; listen, affirm, show interest
2	Pray Together and For Each Other	Short prayer moments, share prayer needs
3	Heart-Focused Discussions	Ask open-ended, heart-level questions
4	Practice Grace and Apologies	Humble confession, invite feedback from your teen
5	Gospel-Centered Correction	Address attitudes, not just actions; teach biblical motives
6	Shared Project or Service	Work or serve together, highlight values in action
7	Reflect and Celebrate Progress	Family discussion to reflect, affirm growth, and encourage

Reaching Resistant or Defiant Teens

- Prioritize connection, patience, and clarity.
- Emphasize grace and consistent presence; avoid battles for control.
- Validate every positive step and foster a safe environment over flawless compliance.

Practicing Affirmation

Remind your child daily that you are for him or her, not against them. Say something like, “You’re my favorite fifteen-year-old, and I’ll always be your biggest fan.”

May the Lord grant you wisdom, give your children grace, and let the gospel shape your family for every season.

Thank You!

Thank you for joining us today. We are not perfect parents. We are not parenting experts. We are fellow parents on the same journey, perhaps a few steps ahead of you on the path. To encourage other parents, like yourselves, we have written down what we've learned and hope to pass along in our book, *Reaching Your Child's Heart: A Practical Guide to Faithful Parenting*.

We encourage you to read the book together with other parents. Form a discussion group. Walk with one another during this season of life. Look for older parents in your church and learn from them. Then, when you've been on the path a while, look for those parents just starting out, and walk with them.

May our Lord richly bless you with great joy in parenting and allow you to see your children run hard after Christ all the days of their lives.

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.
(The apostle John writing to Gaius, 3 John 1:4)

Grace and peace,

Juan and Jeanine Sanchez

