Parenting God’s Way

Day 8:

**Areas for Successful Parenting: Ethics**

Your responsibility as a godly parent includes teaching your children basic ethical guidelines for living, such as honesty, reliability, and obedience. Keep your children attuned to the words of Scripture on these traits, and they’ll develop a clear and correct ethical foundation for their conduct.

For example, all children will fall into dishonesty at some time or another. To address this destructive inclination, turn to God’s Word (Prov. 12:22; Eph. 4:25). Stress the rewards for honesty, including the blessing of a clear conscience (Rom. 9:1). Encourage your children to understand that even if their dishonesty isn’t discovered, their own conscience will trouble them. Because God wants them to have peace in their hearts, He’s provided His instructions for right and honest living.

Reliability is another character trait to stress in your desire to cultivate ethically sound conduct. Encourage your children to be people who “keep their promises even when it hurts” (Ps. 15:4 NLT). An obedient attitude will contribute positively to their ethical development. Children who’ve been taught there are negative consequences to violating the rules will know the value of obedience throughout life and will have a firm foundation for moral behavior as they grow.

All of Scripture will aid you as you seek to instill sound ethical principles in your children. Be diligent in addressing unethical behavior, such as dishonesty, before it becomes a pattern. Share relevant Bible verses together and express thanks when your family experiences days free of such temptations. Read aloud passages that describe the blessings of making ethically correct choices (Deut. 28; the book of Proverbs), and rejoice that God promises to reward us for acting in righteousness. When instances of unwanted behavior do occur, address them quickly but lovingly so that they don’t become habits. You may discover that God’s truth will often convict your children about wrongdoing more effectively than you can. Always deliver the Word in love; it has its own power to act.

**Digging Deeper**

1. Do my children observe honesty in me? Can they view me as a person who tells the truth, doesn’t lie to get ahead, and keeps promises made to others?
2. Are there examples I can share with my children to illustrate how God has blessed me, or them, for acting honestly or obeying His other commands that relate to ethical behavior?
3. How can I show my children where recent unwanted behavior has had negative results in their lives and encourage them to seek improvement in this area?

**Scripture:**

Proverbs 12:22 The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in those who tell the truth.

Ephesians 4:25 So stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbors the truth, for we are all parts of the same body.

Romans 9:1 With Christ as my witness, I speak with utter truthfulness. My conscience and the Holy Spirit confirm it.

Psalm 15:4 Those who despise flagrant sinners, and honor the faithful followers of the Lord, and keep their promises even when it hurts.