

# Biblical Parenting for Pre-Teens

## I. A Communication Barrier is Erected

### A. **The real cause:** a broken spirit resulting in bitterness.

1. Heb 12:15 - See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.
2. God's grace to us is undeserved forgiveness.
3. When this grace is not reproduced in the attitudes of parents towards their children - bitterness (the opposite of grace) results.

### B. **The problem:** incorrect methods of discipline.

1. Eph 6:4 - Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.
  - a. **Exasperate** (παροργίζω) = provoke to anger, continue to irritate.
  - b. **Bring up** (εκτρέφω) = to cherish, to bring up to maturity, to nourish.
  - c. **Training** (παιδεία) = instruction & discipline, punishment to improve behavior, spank (train by action).
  - d. **Instruction** (νουθεσία) = admonition, instruction, teaching, warning, to cause children to learn; lit. to place it in their mind!
2. What does this mean?
  - a. Both **training** (discipline, spanking) & **instruction** are necessary for raising a child.
  - b. Always try to remove the communication barrier by explaining the offence & why it's wrong.
  - c. Never over correct by spanking in anger or too severely.
  - d. Never leave leftover guilt. **ILL: Joel when I failed to spank him.**

### C. **Our typical reaction.**

1. Benjamin Spock psychology, in my generation, resulted in bitter & rebellious children.
2. **The wrong way:** We tend to justify our actions. "Dad must leave the impression that he is always right".
3. **The right way:** Admit to your children when you are wrong & ask their forgiveness (just like the Bible asks you to do).
4. We compensate for not admitting we are wrong by over generosity to try to make up for our wrong behavior.

## II. But - the Child Becomes Ungrateful

### A. **The real cause.**

1. The attitude that his parents owe him their generosity in return for their failure to admit they were wrong.
2. J. Edgar Hoover (former Head of the FBI): "The chief characteristic of a juvenile delinquent is the attitude that society owes them a living".

### B. **The problem:** the parents negotiated a tragic trade.

1. Many parents refuse to humble themselves, admit they are wrong & ask their child's forgiveness.
2. The child reciprocates by refusing your affection.
3. Prov 13:10 - Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice.
4. Prov 28:13 - He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.
5. II Cor 10:12 - When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.
6. These scriptures state that almost all contention stems from pride.
7. So - swallow your pride, parents. Initiate reconciliation by asking your child for forgiveness.

### C. Our typical reaction.

1. "When I was your age, I . . ."
2. This attitude is what creates the "Generation Gap" & your child becomes even more separated into his own little world.

## III. Then - the Child Becomes Rebellious

### A. The real cause: a rejection of authority.

1. II Tim 3:2-4 - People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God . . .
2. When a child rejects parental authority, he removes himself from God's channel of authority & protection over him. Eph 6:1-3 - Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" — which is the first commandment with a promise — "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."
  - a. What a child thinks of daddy is often how he thinks of God! (Prov 17:6).
  - b. Rejection of family leads to rejection of all authority. Rom 13:1-2 - Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.
3. The Bible says rebellion is like witchcraft & idolatry (I Sam 15:23).
  - a. **Witchcraft** is joining forces with Satan.
  - b. **Idolatry** is the rejection of God.
  - c. So the fruit of rebellion is a rejection of God!
4. So - the child sets himself up as his own authority!
  - a. Like Adam & Eve at the tree, he desires to be like God (Gen 3:4-5).
  - b. He begins following Satan's example. Is 14:13-14 - You said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High."

### B. The problem: you lost your child!

1. If you lose your child's heart & mind, what do you have left?
2. What is a parent to do? Col 3:21 - Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.
  - a. **Embitter** (ερεθίζω) = provoke, make resentful, irritate, stir up a spirit of division.
  - b. **Discouraged** (αθυμέω) = may be enraged. (We get our word "fume" from this word), disheartened, discouraged.
3. What does this mean?
  - a. Don't add fuel to the fire but be an example of godliness to your children.
  - b. I Tim 4:12 - Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.

### C. Our typical reaction.

1. We nag, increase our demands & tighten the restrictions - right?
2. Well - this succeeds in driving him to seek companionship & encouragement elsewhere.

What do we do? God's word provides the answers, but we feel more comfortable doing it the way we were raised. Or we try the most recent parenting trend which is usually opposed to God's way. Or worse, we simply parent by trial & error with no direction at all! Let God's word direct your parenting!