

## Parenting Like Satan

### I. Parenting Like Satan

- **Satan lies to his children.**
  - Revelation 20:3 & 10
  - Satan's whole government is built on a lie. There are far too many to enumerate here. He lies about absolutely everything. But for our purposes today, we must consider how we deceive our kids.
  - Do you knowingly say untrue things to your kids and justify those lies by convincing yourself it's okay because of their age or the fact that they're on a need to know basis or because you're mom or because you really don't want to take the time to parent them well and lying is just easier?
- **Satan manipulates his children.**
  - Revelation 17 & 18
  - Satan manipulates his children by giving them what they want.
  - If our kids are only "obeying" because of what they're going to receive, your relationship with them is a sham. Sure, it may buy you a temporary reprieve, but their demands will return and intensify the older they get, and you will parent your child into a worse version than Veruca Salt from "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory."
  - We should never negotiate with our kids for them to do chores. "Do these dishes and you can play on your device." We don't negotiate with them for their consequences. "I'm taking your phone away until you start respecting me."
  - Affluence is a powerful manipulator.
  - Another way we manipulate our kids is by using worldly wisdom. It may not seem like deliberate manipulation, but when we motivate our kids behavior by any means other than Truth, we're really just manipulating them.
  - Devoid of God's infinitely more important motivation for our obedience, we're only giving our kids half of the truth. We're manipulating them with second-rate reasoning.
  - Satan is going to govern the world by dangling a carrot in front of their noses. He will even let them nibble on it from time to time, but all he's trying to do is keep them from considering the eternal riches God is offering. We should never do the same.
- **Satan scares his children.**
  - Revelation 11:7; Revelation 13
  - When we love our power more than we love God, at one point or another we will use violence to either seize it or keep it.
  - Violence is the natural and expected outcome of increased sin. From Cain through the days of Noah through the murder of Christ and the martyrdom of His saints throughout the millennia, violence is necessary if you're going to prove to a weaker individual how powerful you are.
  - How many of us parent like Satan. We use our bigger size and our louder voices to show our kids who's boss. We lash out physically through pokes and pinches and smacks and punches and kicks. In the Scriptures, violence always refers to something that disrupts the divinely established order of things. It's an affront to God's way of handling issues.
  - However, God commands spanking done in the right way for the right reasons to be a necessary part of teaching our children that sin has painful consequences. Better a stinging heinie now than a failed marriage or job loss or jail time later.

- **Satan controls his children.**
  - Nowhere in Scripture have parents ever been commanded to control their kids.
  - I Timothy 3 tells us that a godly man will manage his house well, but the word translated “manage” means to be responsible for and to lead. A child who doesn’t follow his father’s wise leading isn’t proof that the man didn’t manage his house well.
  - It is never commanded, implied, suggested, or illustrated that parents are to control their kids. But isn’t that so often our goal?
  - The reason Satan has to use lies and bribes and violence is that his goal is to control people. And if we use deceit and manipulation and threats, we’re doing it for the exact same reason.

## II. Not Parenting Like Satan

- **Speak Truth, don’t lie.**
  - God wants me to fill my parenting with His Word, His commands, His expectations, His Scriptures. God wants us to persuade our children to believe Truth, not manipulate them into a behavior.
  - One of the sinful styles uses pragmatic suggestions to persuade and pragmatic demands to control. The other uses spiritually-sounding pragmatic advice to persuade and spiritually-sounding pragmatic commands to control.
  - But God wants us counsel our kids with His Word in order to persuade and admonish with His Word in order to lead.
- **Persuade with Truth, don’t manipulate.**
  - God doesn’t manipulate us by any means — comfortable or uncomfortable. Yes, there are legitimate consequences for sinning and for being righteous, but those are never presented as the goal.
  - We persuade by presenting the Truth, modeling it, and drawing our kids attention to it over and over again.
- **Instill reverence for God with Truth, don’t frighten.**
  - The Lord does want us to fear Him.
  - We should desire more that our children know, understand, and love God than they should be afraid of the consequences they’ll receive if they don’t do what we want.
  - We will have to use consequences in our parenting; God is very clear about that. But, most of it should be about introducing our kids to the majesties of God and inviting them to believe He is Who He says He is.
- **Lead in Truth, don’t control.**
  - It’s not about making our children do anything. It’s not about changing them. It’s about going in the right direction, leading them in the right direction, and praying that they’ll continue in the right direction.
  - And — don’t forget — the right direction is revealed in the Scriptures. It’s up to God to define, not us. It has nothing to do with what we want; it’s all about what He wants.
  - That is how we stop parenting like Satan.
  - Satan is arrogant and prideful. It’s all about what he wants. He doesn’t love anyone more than he lusts after his own glory. That’s why he lies and manipulates and bribes and threatens and kills and frightens and attempts to control people.
  - But, when we parent in Christ, we’re constrained to submit to His will in His ways for His reasons.
  - And it has nothing to do with control . . . it’s all about servant leadership.