

## Children and Morality | the biggest parenting challenges you will face, Part 5

### I. What is Morality?

- One of the definitions of morality from Merriam-Webster is this: morality is “conformity to ideals of right human conduct.” Merri-Web defines right as “being in accordance with what is just, good, or proper.” They define good as “virtuous, right, commendable.”
- But those definitions don’t describe what moral and right and good *are*. They simply define them as being *acceptable*. But acceptable to whom? Nearly every person has their own beliefs about what is right and good and acceptable. They each have their own opinions on what is moral, immoral, and amoral. Morality is simply a belief system about what is right and wrong.
- Regardless of our age, once we believe that we should be our highest authority, we consequently get to decide what’s right and wrong. Of course we do . . . we’re the authority. Isn’t that what authority does?
- If I believe I’m in charge of my satisfaction, and I find that stealing money makes me happy, then I believe that stealing money is an acceptable choice. At that moment, I’ve defined my own morality — even though it likely disagrees with your understanding of morality, the government’s position on the topic, or God’s decrees.
- **Proverbs 21:2; I Corinthians 6:9-10**
- Your understanding of morality isn’t inherently better than your kids. You are a human. Sure, you’ve lived longer and probably have pragmatic reasons you think your experiences and successes and what-not prove that your morality is acceptable.

### II. Wrong Ways to “Protect” Your Children’s Morality

- Sometimes we try to use pragmatic reasons to prove our morality is better. Pragmatically, the fact that you’re older doesn’t mean that your view of morality is superior to theirs. In fact, when you think about it, celebrities whose morals are far outside God’s Word, who are richer and more popular and seemingly more successful than you are — shouldn’t we all agree that their definition of morality is the most accurate? They all sleep around and do drugs and abuse people and have abortions and get divorced and lie and swear. It’s working for them!
- While some parents are trying to argue their definition of morality based off pragmatic reasoning, other parents are trying to shelter their kids from any and all outside influences. They think that as long as their kids aren’t introduced to other views on morality, their kids won’t question the morality of their parents.
- And nearly all parents — when our kids push us into a corner because we can’t debate them into accepting our position or shelter them from all other positions — we throw down the authority card. “You will live by my morality because this is my house and my money, and if you want to live here, you’re going to submit to my morality.” And that’s why some kids run away. They believe they don’t need you to survive. They’d rather be a runaway and live their own morality than submit to yours in a comfortable home.

### III. Two Necessary Truths for Morality in Your Home

- **Your morality is not good enough for your kids.**
  - As we already mentioned, your morality based on your own opinions, feelings, and beliefs are not a sufficient basis for anyone's morality. Who cares what you think? What matters is what God thinks.
  - Even if you have adopted God's definition of morality for your life, your children are going to have to do that for themselves. Your faith isn't good enough for them. Your standards — forced on your kids — won't help anything.
    - Pastor Alan Benson, once said, "I don't want my kids of have my faith. I want them to have their own faith, and for it to look a lot like mine." He went on to explain that every member of his family was responsible for putting their personal trust in God and living accordingly. You never want to try to push your faith on your kids. You want them to put their own faith in Christ. So, no, your morality isn't good enough for your kids. But God's morality is perfect for all of you.
    - Does that mean that merely conforming your views of right and wrong to the Scriptures is good enough? No, probably not.
- **Superficial conformity to the Bible isn't better than rejection of the Bible.**
  - The people in the New Testament Jesus harangued the most were the people with the "highest" views of morality.
  - The Pharisees and Sadducees and Scribes had very high standards for their belief and practice. (**Matthew 23**)
  - How do we avoid the same trap into which the Pharisees fell?
    - Teach your children Who God is and that He is worthy of our worship.
    - Help them understand the glorious satisfaction that comes from submitting ourselves to God.
    - Teach them to use their technology to worship the Lord.
    - Help them embrace their Christ-dependance.
    - Train them to rejoice in submitting to God's authority!
    - Then — and only then — will they embrace the full spectrum of God's morality. And what is God's morality? It's not just doing the right things in the right ways, it's doing the right things in the right ways for the right reasons in the right power.
  - All children create their own morality. But one of God's greatest blessing to your children was to give them you — but not because your morality is better than their's. God's plan is that you believe that *"The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. 6 These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your sons 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 up. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates . . . . When your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What do the testimonies and the statutes and the judgments mean which the LORD our God commanded you?' 21 then you shall say to your son, 'We were slaves [to sin], and the LORD brought us [out] with a mighty hand . . . . 23 He brought us out from there in order to bring us in, to give us the [blessings] which He had sworn to [us].' 24 So the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God for our good always and for our survival, as it is today. 25 It will be righteousness for us if we are careful to observe all this commandment before the LORD our God, just as He commanded us."* (Deuteronomy 6)