

Biblical Parenting Essentials, Phase 2 I reinforcement

- I. We fail our children when we don't teach them the biblical truths about consequences.**
- Biblically speaking, consequences (good and bad) are the natural reactions to our actions.
 - **Sin always has Primary Consequences.**
 - Sin hurts the one who sinned, it hurts their relationship with God, and it hurts the people against whom they have sinned.
 - The most basic truth your kids need to learn about sin is that it always hurts everyone involved.
 - **Sin often requires Secondary Consequences.**
 - Secondary Consequences are the ones that humans consciously put into each other's lives. Some are good, many are bad, but when we speak of Secondary Consequences, most of the time we're talking about the Christ-honoring kind.
- II. We fail our children when we don't give them any Secondary Consequences.**
- Not giving any consequences is actually worse than giving bad consequences.
 - When we give bad consequences, our kids are at least learning one important truth . . . their actions have consequences.
 - When we don't give consequences, we're lying to our kids that our actions don't have necessary reactions. We're lying to them that they can live however they want and that there will be no consequences for it.
- III. We fail our children when we don't give them biblical Secondary Consequences.**
- Biblical reproof is persuading someone that they are wrong. It's not up to you if they refuse to be persuaded, but it is up to you to be as biblically persuasive as possible. Of course, we're talking about persuading people of biblical truths, and that will never be accomplished using worldly methods. So, how do we biblically persuade people? How do we reinforce the truths we've taught our kids?
 - **In order for your children to be persuaded that they made the wrong choice, they need to know that there is an authority who gets to decide what is wrong and right.**
 - Do your kids know and understand that there is an absolute truth that teaches us that there is an objective right way and wrong way to live? If not, you need to teach them. If they're still learning that truth (and, yes, it will take them quite a while to really know it and understand it), you need to continue teaching them these truths.
 - Teach it to them when they're not doing wrong, and teach it to them when they have done wrong.
 - **In order for your children to be persuaded that they made the wrong choice, they need to know the biblical truth behind why their choice was wrong.**
 - Why was what they did wrong? Spoiler Alert! Their choice wasn't wrong because you disagreed with it, didn't like it, were inconvenienced by it, were annoyed by it, had enough of it, can't take it any more, or any other of the self-worshipping, idolatrous reasons we have for believing that our kids have done wrong.
 - No, if what they did were wrong, then there will be biblical truth that will reveal that what they did was a sin.
 - We need to stop focusing on the superficial stuff that annoys us, and take our kids back to the fundamental roots of God's perspective concerning their obedience.

- **In order for your children to be persuaded that they made the wrong choice, they need to understand why the biblically right choice was right.**
 - This is the flip-side of the last point. No, it's not that making your bed or tucking in your shirt is inherently righteous. They need to understand how God commands, expects, and explains a righteous, obedient life.
 - It's not about the action; it needs to be about pleasing the Lord by submitting to the deeper truths about personal holiness.
- **In order for your children to be persuaded that they made the wrong choice, they need to understand the Primary Consequences of their wrong choice.**
 - Your kids need to be reminded repeatedly about the fact that every time they sin they hurt God, hurt others, and hurt themselves.
 - Your kids need to learn that the Primary Consequences were designed by God to reprove us about our sin, but also teach us the most important truths we were ignoring when we chose to sin. The Primary Consequences aren't punishments designed to pay someone back for what they did. They're designed to teach and draw people to God whether that person is born again or not.
- **In order for your children to be persuaded that they made the wrong choice, they often need to experience Secondary Consequences for their wrong choice.**
 - **Did they learn the main biblical lessons they needed to learn without the Secondary Consequence?** If they didn't, then giving them a good Secondary Consequence can help point to and reinforce those lessons.
 - **How many times have they committed the same sin?** The more often they commit the same sin, the clearer it is that they are not repenting as they should, and the more obvious it should be to us that they need more help. And so we should provide them Secondary Consequences that will help them in the process of repentance.
- **In order for your children to be persuaded that they made the wrong choice, the Secondary Consequences need to reinforce and emphasize the biblical truths concerning God and their sin.**
 - **You have to give the consequences for the right reasons.** It's not about you. You need to believe that the Secondary Consequences are necessary to please God and obediently parent your children.
 - **The Secondary Consequence needs to point back to the Primary Consequences.** The Secondary Consequence is not the point . . . it's designed to point to the point.
 - **We need to communicate and re-communicate to our children the purpose of the Secondary Consequence.** Your children need to be reminded about Who God is as well as His expectations for obedience. The need to see how their disobedience was a sin and how their obedience could have pleased the Lord. They need to recognize that their sin hurt their relationship with God, hurt their relationship with you, and hurt them by making it easier for them to sin in the future. They need to understand that simple outward conformity isn't good enough. They need to obey quickly, sweetly, and completely, but—more importantly—they need to obey because they desire to please the Lord with their lives.