

## A Study in Proverbs Principles on Parenting

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The Proverbs were designed not only to instruct the naïve, but also to equip the wise (1:2-6). Therefore, in accordance with their design, may parents arm themselves with these sayings—storing them away, evaluating their own lives by them, and using them in conversation—and as a result, may their children learn to fear God as the true source of wisdom and as their ultimate authority. *God bless you in raising the next generation for Christ!*

The following verses on parenting were taken from Proverbs chapters 10-31 in the New American Standard Bible.

### **The Risks and Rewards of Parenting**

- “A wise son makes a father glad, but a foolish son is a grief to his mother” (10:1).
- “A wise son makes a father glad, but a foolish son despises his mother” (15:20).
- “He who begets a fool does so to his sorrow, and the father of a fool has no joy” (17:21).
- “A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her who bore him” (17:25).
- “A foolish son is destruction to his father, and the contentions of a wife are a constant dripping” (19:13).
- “My son, if your heart is wise, my own heart also will be glad;  
and my inmost being will rejoice, when your lips speak what is right” (23:15-16).
- “The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice, and he who begets a wise son will be glad in him” (23:24).
- “Be wise, my son, and make my heart glad, that I may reply to him who reproaches me” (27:11).
- “Her children rise up and bless her...” (31:28).

### **The Effects of the Parents’ Personal Life on the Family**

#### *Deliverance*

“Assuredly, the evil man will not go unpunished, but the descendants of the righteous will be delivered” (11:21).

#### *Security*

- “In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, and his children will have refuge” (14:26).
- “He who returns evil for good, evil will not depart from his house” (17:13).

#### *Inheritance*

- “A good man leaves an inheritance to his children’s children,  
and the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous” (13:22).
- “There is precious treasure and oil in the dwelling of the wise, but a foolish man swallows it up” (21:20).

#### *Longevity*

- “The wise woman builds her house, but the foolish woman tears it down with her own hands” (14:1).
- “The LORD will tear down the house of the proud, but He will establish the boundary of the widow” (15:25).

#### *Prosperity*

- “A rigorous man who walks in his integrity—how blessed are his sons after him” (20:7).
- “By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established;  
and by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches” (24:3-4).

### **Generational Differences**

- “Grandchildren are the crown of old men, and the glory of sons is their fathers” (17:6).
- “The glory of young men is their strength, and the honor of old men is their gray hair” (20:29).

## **Children: Description**

### *Dependable Worker*

“He who gathers in summer is a son who acts wisely,  
but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who acts shamefully” (10:5).

### *Teachable*

“A wise son accepts his father’s discipline, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke” (13:1).

### *Good Actions*

“It is by his deeds that a lad distinguishes himself if his conduct is pure and right” (20:11).

## **Children: Duties**

### *Never Harm Parents*

“He who assaults his father and drives his mother away is a shameful and disgraceful son” (19:26).

“He who robs his father or his mother, and says, ‘It is not a transgression,’  
is the companion of a man who destroys” (28:24).

“There is a kind of man who curses his father and does not bless his mother” (30:11).

“The eye that mocks a father, and scorns a mother,  
the ravens of the valley will pick it out, and the young eagles will eat it” (20:17).

### *Listen to Parents*

“Cease listening, my son, to discipline, and you will stray from the words of knowledge” (19:27).

“Listen, my son, and be wise, and direct your heart in the way” (23:19).

“Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old” (23:22).  
(Adulthood does not free a son from parental advice.)

### *Make Parents Glad*

“Let your father and your mother be glad, and let her rejoice who gave birth to you” (23:25).  
(The previous verse explains how this happens—through the son being wise and righteous.)

### *Imitate Parents*

“Give me your heart, my son, and let your eyes delight in my ways; for a harlot is a deep pit...” (23:26-27a).

### *Savor Wisdom*

“My son, eat honey, for it is good, yes, the honey from the comb is sweet to your taste;  
know that wisdom is thus for your soul;  
if you find it, then there will be a future, and your hope will not be cut off” (24:13-14).

### *Fear Authority and Be Conservative*

“My son, fear the LORD and the king; do not associate with those who are given to change;  
for their calamity will rise suddenly, and who knows the ruin that comes from both of them” (24:21-22)?

### *Obey Authority*

“He who keeps the law is a discerning son, but he who is a companion of gluttons humiliates his father” (28:7).

### *Do Not Party*

“He who loves wisdom makes his father glad,  
but he who keeps company with harlots wastes his wealth” (29:3).

“Do not give your strength to women, or your ways to that which destroys kings.  
It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, or for rulers to desire strong drink” (31:3-4).

## **God's Support Group: Siblings and Servants**

"A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity" (17:17).

"A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and contentions are like the bars of a castle" (18:19).

"He who pampers his slave from childhood will in the end find him to be a son" (29:21).

"A servant who acts wisely will rule over a son who acts shamefully,  
and will share in the inheritance among brothers" (17:2).

## **Parental Duties**

### *Instruction*

Chapters one through nine are filled with introductory sayings about teaching and motivating children.

For example, see 1:8-9; 2:1-2; 3:1-2, 21-24; 4:1-2, 10-13, 20-22; 5:1-2; 6:20-23; and 7:1-4.

### *Discipline*

"He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently" (13:24).

"Discipline your son while there is still hope, and do not desire his death" (19:18).

"Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it."

(Literally, it says, "...according to his way," which could be good or bad.)

"Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of discipline will remove it far from him" (22:15).

"Do not hold back discipline from the child, although you beat him with the rod, he will not die.

You shall beat him with the rod, and deliver his soul from Sheol" (23:13-14).

"The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother" (29:15).

"Correct your son, and he will give you comfort; he will also delight your soul" (29:17).

### *Inheritance*

"House and wealth are an inheritance from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the LORD" (19:14).

### *Love First*

"Better is a dish of vegetables where love is, than a fattened ox and hatred with it" (15:17).

### *Provide First*

"Prepare your work outside, and make it ready for yourself in the field;  
afterwards, then build your house" (24:27).

"She rises also while it is still night and gives food to her household and portions to her maidens" (31:15).

"She is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are clothed with scarlet" (31:21).

"She looks well to the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness" (31:27).