

## Making Your Parenting Count

*Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.*  
Psalm 90:12 (New International Version)

Three primary ways you can make your parenting count; three ways to wisely use whatever days God gives you as a parent.

- **EXPRESS UNCONDITIONAL LOVE TO YOUR CHILDREN IN WAYS THEY UNDERSTAND.**

While most parents genuinely love their children, their love is not always communicated in ways that their children receive or understand.

*You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine . . . <sup>4</sup> . . . train the younger women to love their husbands and children, . . .* Titus 2:1, 4 (NIV)

### Three Specific Ways to Express Love to Your Child

- Affection - physical contact

*Then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. . . .* Matthew 19:13 (NIV)

- Focused attention

*The Lord is near to all who call on him, . . .* Psalm 145:18 (NIV)

- Positive eye contact

- **DISCIPLINE YOUR CHILDREN.**

*Those who spare the rod of discipline hate their children. Those who love their children care enough to discipline them.* Proverbs 13:24 (New Living Translation)

*Discipline your children while they are young enough to learn. If you don't, you are helping them destroy themselves.* Proverbs 19:18 (Good News Translation)

*A youngster's heart is filled with foolishness, but physical discipline will drive it far away.* Proverbs 22:15 (NLT)

Foolishness = the mistaken idea that things will be better if I get my own way

Discipline = setting limits and enforcing limits

### The Difference Between Discipline and Punishment

	<u>Punishment</u>	<u>Discipline</u>
Purpose:	To inflict a penalty	To promote growth
Focus:	On the past	On the future
Attitude:	Anger	Love (See Proverbs 29:11; Ephesians 6:4)
Result:	Fear, guilt, anger	Security, self-control

- **DESIGN YOUR FAMILY-LIFE TO SPIRITUALLY SHAPE YOUR CHILD'S HEART.**

*“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”<sup>37</sup> Jesus replied: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’<sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment.”* Matthew 22:36-38 (NIV)

*Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.<sup>6</sup> These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.<sup>7</sup> Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.* Deuteronomy 6:5-7 (NIV)

### Three Principles About Love for God and Family Life

- Love for God starts with the parent's example.

- Parents must be active in spiritually shaping their child's heart to know and love God. (See Ephesians 6:4)

- Family life must revolve around love for God.