



D. J WILSON EMPOWERMENT SERVICES

Family Matters

Building Spiritually Strong & Vibrant Families

~AN EXCERPT~

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SPIRITUAL EMPOWERMENT FOR THE FAMILY



Since every **family** and each person in it is unique, there's no magic, one-size-fits-all parenting plan that's guaranteed to give you a healthy and happy family. And, since nobody is perfect in this fallen world, there's no such thing as a perfect family. But, there are some basic principles that will help you create a family in which each member can grow **spiritually**, **emotionally**, and **relationally** — which will help you build the healthy, happy family God wants you to enjoy.

Here's how you can build a healthy and happy family:

⇒ **Be there.**

Your children regard your very presence as a sign of caring and connectedness. It's crucial for you to spend as much time as possible with them. Keep in mind that your job as a parent is a calling from God—more important than any other work you do, including the job you get paid to do —and your influence on your children will be your greatest legacy.

Ask God to help you make whatever sacrifices you need to make to free up your time and energy to be there for your children often. Be available to talk with them, help them, attend their events, and cheer them on in their various pursuits. Your children crave your presence, and nothing can make up for your absence.

⇒ **Express affirmation, warmth, and encouragement.**

Parents who practice *loving-parenting*, as opposed to *shame-based parenting*, will create a home where children and spouses feel more secure. Aim to make your children feel accepted, appreciated, listened to, and loved.



Give your children confidence by letting them know that you believe in them, value them, and enjoy them. Say "I love you" to them often, and give them plenty of physical affection like hugs and kisses.

⇒ **Build healthy morals and values.**

The decisions that children make today will often affect them for the rest of their lives. Pray for God's help to teach biblical values and morals to your children in ways they can best learn. Talk openly and honestly with them about sex, alcohol, and other drugs from when they're young, all the way through their teen years, answering their questions and discussing issues in age-appropriate ways.

⇒ **Discipline with consistency.**

When you clearly express expectations and consistently follow through, you'll produce responsible children. Keep in mind that consistent discipline takes lots of time and energy.

Ask God to give you the strength you need to devote the necessary time and energy rather than taking the easy way out when you're tired and have your children fail to learn important lessons.

Remember, the Bible promises that if you train your children in the way they should go, when they're old they won't depart from it.

⇒ **Communicate well.**

Positive communication is the language of love for your children. Make a habit of listening carefully to your children whenever they share their thoughts and feelings with you. Also, figure out what other ways you can best express your love for them in ways that each of them will receive well. Apologize to them when you've



made a parenting mistake.

Allow the conflicts you experience with your spouse and children to be a path to deeper communication by helping you all understand each other better and work as a team to solve problems.

⇒ **Play together.**

There is nothing like play to bring about family togetherness. Make time for vacations together, have fun at home, go on frequent simple outings like to the park or to get ice cream.

⇒ **Pray together.**

There is nothing more powerful than praying together as a family. Pray about everything. Family conflicts, finances, school assignments, everything. Also, let your children observe you praying and reading the word so that they too will appreciate the value of seeking prayer when they are alone.

⇒ **Love your spouse.**

If you're married, work on your marriage regularly and invest in it through activities like frequent dates, since a loving marriage brings hope and security to your children. If you're a single parent, build relationships with others at your church who care about your children and are willing to invest in their lives.

⇒ **Remember that the best things in life aren't things.**

Healthy stewardship and sound financial decisions produce positive family priorities. Follow a budget to live within your means, avoid debt, tithe and give in other



generous ways, and save regularly. Modeling these healthy financial practices will teach your children valuable practical and spiritual lessons.

⇒ **Energize your family's spiritual growth.**

Your greatest calling in life is to leave a spiritual legacy for your children. So make your relationship with God through Christ your top priority. Grow closer to Christ individually and as a couple with your spouse. Pray for and with your children in a regular family devotional time and talk about God often as you go through your daily activities together.

⇒ **Understand that Christian families are definitely not perfect.**

Every day you will fight for God, and peace in your household. Let the Lord give you strength. It will eventually work out.

(Adapted from: *“The 10 Building Blocks for a Solid Family by Jim Burns”*; and *“Family Matters” by D J Wilson*)

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