

# Marriage



## **MARRIAGE PART 27 - PARENTING**

In part 27, of this marriage covenant resource, I want us to look at parenting. This is an area within the family dynamic that can be joyous and wonderful, while at the same time be the most testing and challenging aspect of your relationship. In fact, there can be a combination of all four of these elements within the context of parenting at any given time.

There are many different aspects of parenting we could discuss, but for this resource I want us to focus on being on the same page when raising our kids.

Whether they are children from natural conception or adoption, it is essential that as a couple, we come to an agreed method, or way, we will parent our children.

For many we will parent the way we have been parented, because this is the model we have seen and been brought up under. This is not the golden standard, as some will favour a completely different way to that which they were raised under, due to their experience of that style.

For the couple who plan to have children or already have children, how we have been raised can be the greatest challenge or the greatest advantage. If both spouses have been raised with the same style of parenting, a mutual agreement and understanding can be put in place before the process even begins.

Finding common ground can be the greatest test and challenge, so it is important there is clear and precise communication and clear guidelines, or expectations, that are adhered to when it comes to how the children will be parented.

Consistency and making sure the agreed guidelines are put in place and kept is the key to great parenting and helping your children thrive within the boundaries that the parents have set.

Children and teenagers need clear boundaries for them to thrive and it is important that we communicate clearly, making sure that the children and teenagers understand these boundaries and the consequences for going beyond the boundary. All of this is to be done from love. The primary care or focus is for the child's heart and well-being, while the secondary focus is their behaviour.

As parents it's essential that your yes be yes and your no be no. Children, no matter what their age, will look for cracks in your armour and they will look to exploit these cracks at the earliest opportunity, so being true and consistent to what you have established is a must. Children will try to play parents off against each other and this is why parents are to have a clear path and process for how they parent, as opposed to making it up on the spot.

# Marriage



There are different parenting styles or approaches, just as there are different leadership styles or approaches and they are all correct styles when used in conjunction with the age and maturity of the child.

There are predominately three parenting styles - Autocratic, Democratic, Laissez-Faire

Each style is to be empowered and informed by love.

## **1. THE AUTOCRATIC POSITION OF PARENTING**

This position is very useful and applicable between the ages of one to twelve years old. It is where the parent is leading, making the big decisions and giving a small amount of input to the child in the decision-making process. The child is very much being led by the parent into what the parent deems as most suitable for the child. There is pretty much no negotiation within this position of parenting, and the choices which are given, are still determined by the parent.

Example: Would you prefer broccoli or carrots for your vegetable in tonight's meal?

## **2. THE DEMOCRATIC POSITION OF PARENTING**

This position is very useful and applicable when parenting teenagers. The parent is still the parent and leading the way, but the young person starts to have more input into different things and in the decision-making process, while still being firmly placed under the parent's watchful guidance.

This is where there becomes a greater opportunity to earn trust through the freedom that is being given by the parents, but this freedom is to be in incremental measures which the parent believes the child can handle. Too much freedom can cause the child to abuse the freedom and end up hurting themselves and others.

Once again, this position has clear boundaries which have been established and which the young person is to operate in and under. As the teenager comes into their later teen years there is much more freedom given, but once again, still under the parents watchful eye. There is much need for responsibility and accountability in this leadership position and it is still the parent's responsibility to hold the young person accountable to the culture of the home which the parents live out and set.

## **3. THE LAISSEZ-FAIRE POSITION OF PARENTING**

This is the position of the highest utmost trust, where the teenager is now a young adult making decisions and creating their own pathway in life. This is more about the young adult seeking the council

# Marriage



and wisdom of their parent, while being free to start to make their own decisions. This is no longer about being under a parent's leadership and guidance, but coming beside the parent and more of a friendship is now taking place.

The father and mother transition from the parent position to more of a friend position, all the while remaining and being the child's parent.

All the positions should be applied in an appropriate manner to the age and maturity of the child.

## QUESTIONS

1. What have been some of the greatest challenges you have faced when it has come to parenting?
2. What kind of parenting position did you mainly experience growing up?
3. How has this position influenced and effected the way you are parenting?
4. Why is giving clear boundaries and expectations of what you expect as a parent, so important for children and young people?
5. Why is it essential you follow through on what you say as a parent?

Watch the accompanying You Tube videos here: <https://youtu.be/SI-GpF7e1M>