



## Godly Parenting | Session #5

### Character—Heart Preparation for Christlikeness

**Prep: Read Chapter 5**

### Group Kick-Off (start with any or all of these)

#### Break the Ice:

- If you had the character traits of a cartoon character, who would you be and why? Or... Which cartoon character best fits the personalities of your children?
- What is one takeaway that you highlighted or that stood out to you in this chapter?

#### Set the Stage: (Review from Session #4):

Balanced and biblical discipline will give you a sure foundation of love and respect to build upon for years to come. By establishing control and discipline early, your child will better understand that you are for them and not against them, and will prepare them for God's ultimate authority in their lives.

#### Key Verse:

*My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother... For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is a light; and the reproofs of instruction are the way of life. -Proverbs 29:17*

#### BIG IDEA:

We instill character into our children's hearts and lives in ways that we can, trusting God's Spirit to clothe our children in the character of Christ in ways that we can't.

#### Identifying your goal:

What is the goal of having children of character? Is it to make us look good as parents? To prevent embarrassment in front of others? To produce moral, good citizens of earth? Unfortunately, all of those things are temporal at best. However, instilling godly character into our children is a way to tap into their hearts for a lifetime and beyond. Deep-rooted character in the heart outlasts your words and even your presence as a parent. Such character is what produces Daniels and Esthers who can withstand moral decay all around them, standing up to defend truth in the midst of compromise. True character can solve a host of problems in our children's lives as they get older. And many of the world's problems can be credited to a lack of it. The old saying that "people rarely change" is often true for both the good and the bad. Character is a worthy goal, because once cemented within the heart, it's hard to lose for a lifetime.

### How to Develop Godly Character

Discuss the two voices mentioned that God has given your child to help develop character:

- Their God-given conscience

#### Small Group Study

- God's Holy Spirit at work in them
- How are these two things uniquely different?
- Why are both of these things important?

Discuss the differences between training and correction from pages 96-97. Both are necessary, but an imbalance of the two can lead to negative results in your parenting. Too much correcting and not enough intentional training will lead to frustration.

Discuss this quote: *“Correction has more to do with behavior. Training has more to do with character.”*

- Which one addresses more of the head?
- Which one addresses more of the heart?

Discuss the concepts of “Forward Thinking Parenting” and “Positive Parenting” from pages 98-100.

- Which one is a greater struggle for you personally?
- Which one stands out to you as the greater need in your own parenting to be successful at instilling character in your kids?

## Protect Their Appetites, Protect Their Heart

Read Proverbs 25:16, Proverbs 29:15 & Proverbs 4:23.

One of the greatest parenting lies of our generation is that we need to be much more permissive with our children than in previous generations. However, greater permissiveness most often leads to greater passivity, which is not what we should want for our children.

If we know how hard it is to keep our own appetites in check as an adult, how much more are we responsible as parents to help our children protect their own hearts by stewarding their appetites?

- What are some key appetites or areas of accountability that parents need to give attention to in order to protect their child's hearts?
- Think of some children of character that you know personally. Do they come from overly permissive homes or homes with a sense of structure and accountability?
- Looking back on your own childhood, did your parents do a good job of protecting your heart through protecting your appetites? What could you learn from this, either good or bad, for your own parenting?

## Be a Leaky Faucet

*“Through the seasons of parenthood, you are filling your child's character bucket. And it's very easy to get discouraged when you don't see the impact your efforts are making. But it's not because your efforts are not making an impact. Your efforts are drops in the bucket, and they'll pay off in filling your child's character over time through consistency.*

*Most parents want to pour themselves out into their children. Wise and godly parents do it one drop at a time.” (from page 110)*

**“More than your kids will become what you say, they will become who you are.”**

Christlike character is as much caught as it is taught. Come up with at least five ways to be a leaky faucet in your child’s heart and life on a regular basis:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

- Why is inconsistent consistency better than no consistency at all?

Discuss how this quote from page 112 either encourages you or makes you think?

*“Don’t forget this—if you’re striving to honor God in your parenting, you can’t ruin your kids. As a Christian parent, just as nothing you can do has the power to save your children, nothing you can do has the power to ruin your children. Your job is to provide a firm foundation. Their job is to choose to build upon it.*

*God’s grace is always greater than your failures in parenting. 2 Timothy 2:13 reminds us that even when we are faithless, God is still faithful. God’s grace is always on your side in both your best and worst moments as a parent.”*

How can we specifically channel all of our efforts at building our children’s character into lifelong Christlikeness rather than just moral goodness?

Which “Helpful How-to Heart Hack” on pages 113-114 is the best practical takeaway for you from this chapter?

As time allows, finish by discussing any “Heart of the Matter” questions on page 114.

**EXTRA NOTES:**

---

---

---

---

---

---