



VILLAGE BIBLE CHURCH
SUGAR GROVE CAMPUS

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Proverbs: Search for Wisdom, Part 5

Tim Badal | August 17, 2014 |

Proverbs 22:1-21



For the past few weeks, we've been in a series entitled "Proverbs: Search for Wisdom." Today we are in Proverbs 22 as we endeavor to seek God's wisdom for our everyday lives. In particular, we're going to focus our attention on one verse. I want to remind you that the definition of a Proverb is a short, **aphoristic saying**. That means Proverbs are usually true in most circumstances, not necessarily promises. This is important to remember because we're going to look at a well-known passage on parenting. Some of you have taken this proverb as a promise and are wondering why your children aren't walking with the Lord anymore. I want to look at **Proverbs 22:6** and its context to see how to be wiser parents. This message is not just for parents but for kids as well.

I'm going to read **Proverbs 22:1-21** and then we'll ask God's blessing. Listen to what Solomon shares with his son:

A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches,
and favor is better than silver or gold.
² The rich and the poor meet together;
The LORD is the maker of them all.
³ The prudent sees danger and hides himself,
but the simple go on and suffer for it.
⁴ The reward for humility and fear of the LORD
Is riches and honor and life.
⁵ Thorns and snares are in the way of the crooked;
Whoever guards his soul will keep far from them.
⁶ Train up a child in the way he should go;
even when he is old he will not depart from it.
⁷ The rich rules over the poor,
and the borrower is the slave of the lender.
⁸ Whoever sows injustice will reap calamity,
And the rod of his fury will fail.
⁹ Whoever has a bountiful eye will be blessed,
for he shares his bread with the poor.
¹⁰ Drive out a scoffer, and strife will go out,
And quarreling and abuse will cease.
¹¹ He who loves purity of heart,
and whose speech is gracious, will have the king as his friend.
¹² The eyes of the LORD keep watch over knowledge,
but he overthrows the words of the traitor.
¹³ The sluggard says, "There is a lion outside!
I shall be killed in the streets!"
¹⁴ The mouth of forbidden women is a deep pit;
he with whom the LORD is angry will fall into it.
¹⁵ Folly is bound up in the heart of a child,
But the rod of discipline drives it far from him.
¹⁶ Whoever oppresses the poor to increase his own wealth,
or gives to the rich, will only come to poverty.

¹⁷ Incline your ear, and hear the words of the wise,
and apply your heart to my knowledge,
¹⁸ for it will be pleasant if you keep them within you,
if all of them are ready on your lips.
¹⁹ That your trust may be in the LORD,
I have made them known to you today, even to you.
²⁰ Have I not written for you thirty sayings
of counsel and knowledge,
²¹ to make you know what is right and true,
that you may give a true answer to those who sent you?

Father God, we come before You. As I open Your Word, I pray that You would move in the hearts of both parents and their children. Train the parents so they may lead their families well. Teach the children how to choose what is right and good as they look at this new world ahead of them. I ask for Your blessing on Your Word now. In Christ's Name I pray. Amen and amen.

I was thinking about the subject of parenting a couple of weeks ago when my family and I were on vacation in western Michigan at an amusement and water park called, [Michigan Adventure](#). As I was getting ready to ride one of the rides, I realized that parenting is a lot like a roller coaster. At the beginning of it there's all this excitement and you think, "Oh, this is going to be great." Then you get into the ride itself and you start asking yourself, "Why in the world did I get on the ride?" Then you start climbing the first steep hill and that obnoxious clicking noise drives you crazy because you're wondering, "When is it going to stop? When is it going to be done?" And you start to think the hill is a whole lot steeper than it looks. All of the sudden, the floor drops out from underneath you and excitement quickly turns into holding on for dear life. You're screaming your head off, pleading for the ride to be over. You go through a series of turns, steep peaks and valleys, then you go through a tunnel and you don't know what direction you're going. At a moment's notice the ride comes to a stop and it's all over. You think, "That went way too fast! Right when I was starting to figure it out, when I was really starting to enjoy it, it's over!" If you're a parent, you know exactly what I'm talking about.

Parenting is incredibly difficult. You need to be careful to not oversimplify parenting by setting your own standards for what it means to be a good parent. If anyone tells you that they're an expert on parenting, they're obviously not a parent. Before we had our children, Amanda and I had three theories on parenting. Now that we've had three boys, we have zero theories on parenting. It is hard work. It is something that will test the fortitude of every father and mother.

You cannot simply say, "If you do x, y and z, then this will result." The Bible gives no guarantees on parenting. There are no guarantees. It doesn't say, "If you do this verse, your kids are going to walk with the Lord." Or, "If you make sure you do this thing, they are going to be successful when they grow up." However, the Bible does give you some advice.

Some of you have done a fine job parenting your kids. You have dedicated yourself to living and teaching your kids the way of the Lord, only to have them break your heart because they want nothing to do with Jesus. They want nothing to do with your faith. You ask yourself, "Where did I go wrong?" You as parents have a role, but your child has responsibility. God has given them the responsibility to make their own decisions and they will answer for the decisions they make.

1. The Parent's Role

God has some wonderful advice and opportunities for parents in this Proverb. It begins with the parent's role. What is your role as a parent? In [verse six](#) you are given a challenge: "*Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.*" I want to give you one of my own proverbs on parenting.

Parents are called to train

Let's just stop here for a moment—parents are called to train. That word "train" in verse six is a verbal imperative. It's not a suggestion; it's a command. It is something that should be the foremost priority in your family. If you have children, and they are still in your home, your first priority is to raise up your children and train them during that time.

But what does that training look like? That word "training" is the Hebrew word [chanak](#). You've got to kind of growl it out, "*chanak*." Here's why I think that's an important thing: doesn't that word sound like parenting feels? A little gritty, a little growly. *Chanak*. It hurts a little bit to even say it. God's giving us a picture of what parenting is like. It's gritty. It's growly. It's something that hurts at times.

This word is often translated “train” in our Scriptures. More broadly it means to dedicate or to consecrate something. It was often used to describe the act of taking an object of ordinary use and sanctifying it for something sacred. The priest would take a goblet, or a candleholder that would be used in the home and consecrate it for use in the Temple. What does that mean for parents? As a parent, you take ordinary, average, run-of-the-mill kids and nurture them, invest in them so they can do extraordinary things for God. That’s what being a parent looks like as a follower of Jesus Christ.

This word *chanak* also comes with a disclaimer. The Proverb doesn’t just say, “Train your child however you want.” It says, “*Train up a child in the way he should go.*” Now, that training has two aspects to it. **It begins by pointing them in the right direction.**

Not too long ago, I was catering an event at a park. I was busy grilling the food for a group of moms having a play date at the playground. One of the kids was different from every other kid because this kid was getting all muddy. I don’t mean your run-of-the-mill muddy; he was taking globs of mud and putting it all over his face and clothes. I thought to myself, “Okay, someone’s got to say something because now little Johnny is trying to put mud on the other kids. There’s going to be a fight here because Tidy Mom looks upset.” So finally I’m amazed at the emotional composure of one of the moms because she says, “Johnny probably shouldn’t be playing in the mud like that. Look at him. He’s a mess!” To which Johnny’s mom said, “That is how Johnny expresses himself and we don’t want to thwart any expression.”

Godly parenting is not child-centered parenting. Your kid doesn’t determine where he or she is going. For instance, when you’re driving in the car you have total control over where you’re going. They can yell and scream, but you’re the one saying, “We’re going here.” Imagine a world where parents were secondary to kids. It would be anarchy. It would be chaos. God says in His Word that parents set the direction. You determine the right direction, not the child.

So training includes pointing the child in the right direction, but it also **allows for flexibility**. I had to come to learn this when child number two came along. I had to understand that what we had learned and how we parented child number one wasn’t the same way we might parent child number two. What worked with child number one didn’t always work with child number two. That means you must allow flexibility in your parenting methods.

Why do we do this? We do this for a couple of different reasons:

1. We allow for flexibility because no two children are the same. The Bible says that children are special. [Psalm 127:3](#) says that children are a gift from the Lord. They are special little buggers. Yes, they are special, but they are special savages. Your cute little baby you brought home from the hospital is a special gift from the Lord, but your baby is sinful. During your first couple of years raising your children, did they ever stop and say, “Can I help you with something”? No! They’re selfish little creatures. Never do they stop and say, “Hey mom, why don’t you just take some time off and I’ll make dinner.” Or, “I’ll change my own diaper.” They are selfish, sinful little creatures. [Psalm 51](#) says we are born in our mother’s womb into iniquity.
2. They are also simple creatures. The Bible says that young people are simple. They lack understanding and wisdom. The worst thing you can do is say, “Junior, you tell me what you want to do; you point me in the direction you want to go.” That is the worst thing that you could do as a parent because children don’t know. Children have this whole new world around them and they have no idea what is going on unless wise and knowledgeable people come around them and tell them what to do.

We thought that we had it all figured out when we had Noah. The first couple of years, before we had our second son, we became parenting “experts.” We were ready to go on a teaching circuit. We thought, “This is easy.” Then Josh came along. Josh is nothing like Noah. And Luke, our third, is nothing like the first two. It’s amazing that our children’s DNA came from the same source and yet our children are so vastly different.

With our first son, we thought, “This is how we are going to do our parenting. One size fits all.” We quickly learned to be flexible with our methods. If you’ve been to Walt Disney World, there’s a ride called the “Grand Prix” that has race cars that go along a track. When I go with Joshua, he gets in his car and it’s like a Sunday morning drive. We’re just enjoying ourselves, straight as an arrow. Where the road curves, we curve and all of that. Well, when I go with Noah it is completely different. Noah’s slamming on the gas and then immediately hitting the break. We’re swerving back and forth—luckily there’s a metal rail on the underside of the car that keeps us from killing people left and right.

Both Joshua and Noah finished in the same spot, but the journey was far different for both of them. One drove like you’re supposed to drive. And Noah—who is all me, not his mom—was bouncing all over the place. Some of you have kids and they just

do what they're supposed to: follow the rules. God bless them. God's made them that way. There are other kids who want to jump off that track and with reckless abandon go and enjoy life. God's created them that way. What we need to do is create enough space in our parenting for the child who's straight laced and the child who's free-spirited to express themselves in a way that doesn't hurt themselves or hurt others.

Parents are called to glorify God at all times

We want to train our kids to glorify God at all times. What does that look like? The best thing you can do is not to raise good kids but godly ones. Some of you are only interested in raising good kids. You want to raise good students, good athletes, good musicians, good artisans. You want to raise kids who will be good employees, good citizens, good neighbors, good spouses and good parents. You might say, "Well, if my child loves God, that's just whipped cream on top of the sundae." Proverbs says that you should desire to raise godly kids who--win, lose or draw--glorify God. That is your goal. If you're a follower of God's Word, your number one goal shouldn't be your kids' prowess on the athletic field, in the classroom, in the job market or your kids' ability to get admitted into the best schools. The most important thing is that they will live for Christ day in and day out.

Parents are called to address the important topics in life

Training involves education. You have to talk with your kids. You have to teach your kids. You have to educate your kids on what it means to be a godly person. It's easy to just tell your kids Scriptural truths. However, parenting isn't just about education; it also involves being an example. Some of you might say to your children, "Do as I say, not as I do." Godly parents say, "Do as I say, and as I do." You need to tell your kids what to do, and then you need to model it for them. You need to be able to say, "Here's why we do what we do and here's how I'm doing it. This is how I am submitting myself to God and His Word." There are eight different ways that I believe this Proverb says we can train our kids. I hope and pray this will become a template for you.

The first way is found in **verse one: a good reputation is better than riches**. *"A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold."* This means your name, your reputation, is important. When people hear your name do they roll their eyes and say, "Oh man, that person? He's trouble. That person? He's dishonest. That person? He's a schemer." The community ought to say, "That's a wonderful person. That's a trustworthy person." Teach your kids what it means to have a good name. Don't worry about their salary; worry that they have a trustworthy, kind and beneficial reputation.

Another lesson we can teach our kids is to **honor all people**. **Verse two:** *"The rich and the poor meet together; the LORD is the maker of them all."* What we need to teach our kids is that whether socio-economic status or race, whether they're all put together or their lives are falling apart, all people are important to God, therefore they are important to us. When you teach the song, **"Jesus loves the little children"** to your kids, you're saying, "You've got to love all the precious little kids." Well, the precious little kids grow up into obnoxious adults. Teach your kids that even when people don't agree with you, even when they become your enemies, honor all humanity because God is their Maker and they bear His image.

In **verse four**, we see that **loving God is the key to life**. *"The reward for humility and fear of the LORD is riches and honor and life."* The greatest endeavor in all the world is to know Christ and be known by Him. Knowing God and being known by Him is better than riches, better than any job opportunity, better than any vacation. To have a relationship with God is greater than anything this world could ever give you. You need to demonstrate that. When was the last time you sat down with your child and said, "Let me tell you how great it is to be a follower of Jesus Christ; how wonderful it is; that it brings peace, contentment and joy?"

You must also teach your children **that mastering your money is better than allowing your money to master you**. In **verse seven**, *"The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is the slave of the lender."* Show your kids what it means to be a good financial steward. I am blessed to have parents who taught me what it means to earn an honest living, use that money in wise ways and be content in all things.

This money issues pops up in **verse nine** as well. Teach your kids that **greed is bad and generosity is good**. Growing up in the Badal household, I learned a couple of things. Money was always tight in the Badal family. My parents showed me that in our lack we would be generous toward others. Even though we had little, my parents were always faithful to give to the local church and to give back to God. They always found ways to generously give of their time, talents and treasures.

Though we didn't have much, I was amazed to learn that there were others who had greater needs. Every Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas my parents would invite people over. People who did not have family, or who didn't have much to eat, were welcomed into our home. We just had a ball with those wonderful people. My parents were generous in that ministry. Teach

your kids that greed is bad. When you invest only in yourself, you get nothing in return, but when you invest in serving others, the Bible says that it is always better to give than to receive ([Acts 20:35](#)).

Another thing that you need to teach your children is that **laboring is good and laziness is bad**. [Verse 13](#): *"The sluggard says, 'There is a lion outside! I shall be killed in the streets!'"* Someone here is asking the lazy person, "Why haven't you left your home?" The lazy person answers, "Because there are wild animals outside, and if I go outside, I might get swallowed by one of them." This is an absolutely foolish answer, yet we tell our kids that their laziness is okay, that they can sit around and do nothing. Teach your kids what it means to labor. Even pay them. A laborer or a worker deserves his wage.

As a young boy I worked. Now be careful you don't start saying things like, "When I was a kid I had to walk seven miles up hill to school" and all that. My dad used to talk about trudging through snow. I asked him, "Dad, you were born in Baghdad. When did you ever have snow in Baghdad?" So parents, be careful not to exaggerate.

Teach your kids about laziness. Laziness is so much more prevalent today than it ever has been before. Right in your hands are those little electronic screens. The world is at your disposal and you don't have to move. Technology is great, but it can be overwhelming to a family. About the first or second week into the summer, Amanda brought down the hammer and said, "Turn off all technology." "How long? Ten minutes? Fifteen minutes?" Amanda said, "For the entire summer." Oh, there was weeping and wailing in Ramah. But after the first week or so the kids forgot about it. It was hard for us to turn off our technology and invest in one another. Laziness is something you've got to address.

[Verse 14](#) gets even more personal: *"The mouth of forbidden women (literally, the prostitute) is a deep pit."* You need to teach your children that **all sexual activity is only for their spouse**. Their friends won't tell them that. Their boyfriends or girlfriends won't tell them that. You need to be a role model and teach your kids that God has given sex as a wonderful gift to a husband and wife within marriage. This is something that should not be cheapened. It should not be made trivial. It should not be used as a selfish ploy but should be given to your spouse.

Finally, you need to teach your children **why parents dare to discipline**. Why do you discipline? Well, the Scripture says, *"Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him"* ([verse 15](#)). Our society says, "Folly is bound up in the heart of children but a time out will drive it far from them." The Bible is clear that spanking our kids is right and good. Time outs are wonderful, but spanking is good. There are some of you who will get upset and say, "Oh, spanking is an old fashioned thing. Tim, don't you know psychologists tell us spanking hurts the kid?" Some of the craziest things Sigmund Freud ever said were on the subject of spanking. If you say that what is written here is outdated, your issue isn't discipline; it's trusting the authority of the Word of God. If you believe that the Word of God is your textbook for life, then when the Bible says, "Spank your kids," you will do it.

However, all discipline needs to come with compassion, love and affection. It needs to come with education and instruction. You can't discipline your kids as if they are computers. Recognize that children are people. Your children have their own ideas, they have their own struggles, they have their own personalities, their own view on life. Each one is unique. So you need to parent your children with tenderness and tenacity.

So some of you are really good at showing tenderness. You are your children's best friends. They love you. Whatever they did--good, bad or ugly--they just know they're going to be accepted with open arms and high fives. "You're just the greatest thing in the world," you tell your kids over and over again. You need a little more tenacity in your parenting. What is tenacity? It's stubbornness. It's a resolute feeling of conviction. It's perseverance. You need to tell your kids who the boss is. You must make it clear to your kids that they do not rule the nest.

Some of you are all about rules and regulations. You rule your family with an iron fist. It is not right to do that in isolation. Some of you need to put your arms around your kids and say, "You know what? It's okay. I love you." Some of you need to put your arms around your kids and say, "I've been there before. Don't be ashamed." Show love and affection.

Where do we get tenderness and tenacity from? We get it from our Father in heaven. God is a tender God Who lavishes love on us. Oh, how great the love the Father has lavished upon His children! But never in Scripture do we see that God's people rule the world. Who rules it? God does. God is the great Father Who is tenacious at seeing His ways accomplished.

Parent your children with tenderness and tenacity in balance with one another. So what is the role of the parent? To fulfill your calling to train your children to glorify God at all times by carefully addressing the important topics of life with tenderness and tenacity.

2. The Child's Responsibility

A child is anyone who cannot live on their own. If you're 38 years old and you're drinking your parents' water, and eating your parents' food, and sleeping in your parents' house, and your mailing address is their mailing address, you're a child. That's part of the problem. If you're getting into your late twenties, you must start figuring out why you've been failing to launch. You need to get going in your life.

Be willing to listen to godly counsel

What's your responsibility? What is your job? It's far simpler. In [verse 17](#) there's a word to the child: *"Incline your ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply your heart to my knowledge."* Child, young person, your number one job is to be a listener, not a talker. Your job is to be willing to listen to godly counsel. Notice a couple of things about this phrase *"incline your ear..."* It's a command. That means when mom and dad talk, you listen. Your job is not to give commentary; your job is not to give input; your job is to listen. Why would Solomon say this? Because Solomon is a wise man and understands that a student learns through his ears not through his mouth.

In [Proverbs 13:1](#) we are told, *"A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke."* I love watching sports with my kids. One of the things that just irks me is when they ask questions about everything during the game. "Tell me, why is this guy doing this? Why is this guy doing that?" And my response to them over and over again is, "Listen to the guys who are talking. They're experts. They're going to tell you what's going on in the game. If you'll close your mouth and listen, you'll learn why they're doing it. They'll answer all of your questions."

Notice what this phrase *"incline your ear"* looks like? Literally it means you thirst after it. You give yourself wholly to it. You immerse yourself into it. Immerse yourself in as much godly wisdom as you can. Who are you listening to? Are you listening to Hollywood? That's not going to get you anywhere. Are you listening to your friends? Good luck. I mean your friends are great, but they're just as dumb as you are. You need someone who's wiser, someone who has been around the block a couple of times, who recognizes the temptations, struggles and frailties of humanity. You need someone who can teach you things. That's why Solomon said this to his son in [Proverbs 7:1](#):

My son, keep my words
And treasure up my commandments with you;
² keep my commandments and live;
keep my teaching as the apple of your eye;
³ bind them on your fingers;
write them on the tablet of your heart.
⁴ Say to wisdom, "You are my sister,"
and call insight your intimate friend.

Lifelong learning

Learn what it means to be wise and knowledgeable. Watch people live. As a teenager, God empowered me to look at my parents very differently. Around my junior year, I began to see that my parents weren't full of malarkey, like I thought they were. I saw my parents as followers of Jesus Christ; as obedient children trying to live life to the best of their ability, empowered by the Spirit. There was something very attractive about that. There was something very attractive in how my dad lived life. I said, "I want to be like him." And then God gave me a youth pastor named John Avery, who ministered here. I watched John and his wife live; I watched how they interacted with one another and how they were raising a young family. There was something very attractive about them and I said, "I want to be like that."

As a young person, you need to find someone who causes you to say, "Man, that's how I want to live." Hopefully you can find that within your own home. But if you can't find that within your home, hopefully you can find it within the church. I hope you come here and see men and women of whom you can say, "I want to be like them. I want to live life like they do. They're filled with joy and they've made wise decisions. God is with them and I want to be that way when I grow older."

You need to become a student of the Word. The Bible is full of wonderful biographies of people who have blown it, as well as people who have done it right. A wonderful example is Samson. God empowered him to do wonderful things, yet Samson chose to do it his way over and over again. You need to be a lifelong learner.

Lean on Him always

Verse 19: “*That your trust may be in the LORD.*” My main prayer for my kids comes from **3 John 4**, that there is no greater joy than to know my kids are walking in the Lord. I want my boys to know they can trust mom and dad, they can trust their friends, but their trust is first and foremost in the arms of God. That word **trust** literally means to thrust oneself into the arms of another. Young person, don't thrust yourself into your boyfriend or girlfriend, or into the popular kids' table. Thrust yourself into the arms of God because when you do, you'll never be more protected. Put all your energy and your desire into Him.

3. The Results that God Advertises

These results aren't promises. Just because you do these things and dedicate yourself to these patterns doesn't mean life will go well with you. God says, “When we dedicate ourselves to these things, there are some good opportunities for us.”

Developing truly successful children

Parents, you have the opportunity and the joy of developing truly successful children. You have an opportunity to see your kids grow up into adults who honor God in the good times, the bad times and even the ugly times. My hope and prayer is that my parents can look at their two sons who are still living and say, “They are truly honoring us by honoring the Lord.” That should be your goal as kids. “How can I honor my parents?”

As parents, you need to be praying. **Proverbs 15:20** says that, “*A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish man despises his mother.*” Young people, are your parents glad that you're their kid? Are you making your parents' work a joy and not a burden? Some of the things I'm most ashamed of are the moments when I made my mother cry because of stupid things that I did. Until I was holding my own baby in my hands, I didn't recognize the weight of being a parent. Make your parents proud by living a life that honors God and honors them.

Discerning between right and wrong

It says in **verse 20**, “*Have I not written for you thirty sayings of counsel and knowledge, ²¹ to make you know what is right and true.*” Young person, there is a whole litany of decisions you are about to make. Those decisions will have ramifications in your life for years to come. Your parents are helping you know how to make wise decisions. You think they're cramping your style; you think that they're uncool. I would rather my sons be wise than cool. I would rather my sons make good decisions that they can stand by for years to come than to make a fun decision that could reap disaster in a heartbeat.

We want you to be wise and discerning. Why? So “*that you may give a true answer*” (**verse 21**). So that you can dispense wisdom to your own children. The reason why your parents are hard on you, the reason why your parents are stubborn with you, the reason why your parents are uncool with you is because one day, you're going to have to be hard, stubborn and uncool with your own kids.

Delighting in the good life

If we do this, the Lord doesn't promise it, but He says we'll be able to delight in the good life. **Verse 18:** “*For it will be pleasant if you keep them within you.*” Do you want to live the good life? That word “**pleasant**” is a picture of a full and satisfied belly. My hope and prayer is that my kids would be able to say, “I am glad my dad disciplined me.”

We have some neighbor kids who come from a home that probably doesn't practice these things. One of the boys came up to me once and said, “Noah sure is lucky to have parents that tell him what he should do and what he shouldn't do.” I was blown away. I asked him, “Why would you say that?” He said, “Because I just feel like I'm doing this by myself.”

Kids, you need to understand the last thing you want to do is live life on your own. Even at 38 years of age, I still call my parents and say, “Pray for me. What should I do in this situation?” It is good to have your parents around. Live in such a way that you're grateful for them. Parents, do not neglect that responsibility. God says that society will go the way of the family. One of your greatest opportunities to effect change in your world is by living according to these proverbs. Tie them around your hearts. Live them out so that your kids will be blessed, so your parents will be blessed, so your world will be blessed.

Let's pray.

Father God, thank You for this time in Your Word. Lord, I pray a blessing on these parents, that they would do what is right and good. Train them, Lord, so that they may train others. Lord, I pray for these young people with the myriad of decisions that are

coming their way. Show them the good that comes from wise counsel. Teach them to listen. Teach them to apply this knowledge to their lives. Lord, may they do this, not to gain an award for family of the year, or parent of the year, or child of the year, but because when they parent well, when they submit well, they show the world a picture of the Trinity in action—a Father Who loves, a Son Who submits, a Spirit Who binds it together in peace and love.

So Lord, empower them by Your Spirit to live out these principles. They can't do it on their own; they need Your Spirit's guidance each and every day whether they're a parent, a child, or a grandparent. Thank You for being the greatest and the most perfect of all parents Who loves us and cares for us but also is willing to discipline us when we go the wrong way. Lead this people out, Lord, into their family lives so that they may reflect this teaching. It is in Your Son Jesus' Name I pray, and I ask for His blessing. In Christ's Name I pray. Amen.

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All Scriptures quoted directly from the English Standard Version unless otherwise noted.

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