

### Formative Discipline (Part 2): Communication

#### INTRODUCTION: COMMUNICATION & THE ROD WORKING TOGETHER

“Don’t withhold discipline from a youth; if you punish him with a rod, he will not die. 14 Punish him with a rod, and you will rescue his life from Sheol. 15 My son, if your heart is wise, my heart will indeed rejoice. 16 My innermost being will celebrate when your lips say what is right. 17 Don’t let your heart envy sinners; instead, always fear the Lord. 18 For then you will have a future, and your hope will not be dashed. 19 Listen, my son, and be wise; keep your mind on the right course” (Prov. 23:13–19).

#### WHY DO WE COMMUNICATE?

1. **We image God when we communicate with our children.**

2. **We are commanded by God to communicate with our children.**

“Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up” (Deut. 6:7).

“Fathers, don’t stir up anger in your children, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4).

What is at stake?

“That whole generation was also gathered to their ancestors. After them another generation rose up who did not know the Lord or the works he had done for Israel. 11 The Israelites did what was evil in the Lord’s sight. They worshiped the Baals 12 and abandoned the Lord, the God of their ancestors . . .” (Judg. 2:10–12).

We communicate so that our children may know the Lord and what he has done for us in Christ – and in so doing LIVE!

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### WHAT DO WE COMMUNICATE?

We are called to train our children in the whole counsel of God, which focuses on the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“You pore over the Scriptures because you think you have eternal life in them, and yet they testify about me” (John 5:39).

“One could accurately say, then, that parents who want to be thorough in evangelizing their children need to teach them *the whole counsel of God*, taking care to show the gospel ramifications in all that truth” (John MacArthur, *What the Bible Says About Parenting*, 52).

“The call to formative instruction is a call to provide our children with a [biblical] grid for interpreting and responding to reality” (Tedd and Margy Tripp, *Instructing a Child’s Heart*, 31).

“All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16–17).

### HOW SHOULD WE NOT COMMUNICATE?

“Fathers, don’t stir up anger in your children, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4).

“Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they won’t become discouraged” (Col. 3:21).

1. **Beware of habitual harshness and severity.**
2. **Beware of unreasonable and unrealistic expectations.**
3. **Beware of hypocrisy.**
4. **Beware of neglect and indifference.**
5. **Beware of partiality and favoritism.**
6. **Beware of excessive rules and overprotection.**

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### HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE?

“And we exhort you, brothers and sisters: warn those who are idle, comfort the discouraged, help the weak, be patient with everyone” (1 Thess. 5:14).

**1. Rules**

**2. Correction**

**3. Discipline**

**4. Question-asking**

**5. Instruction**

- a. What is instruction?
- b. What is the parent to instruct?
- c. How should the parents instruct?
- d. What is required of a parent to become a good instructor?

**6. Encouragement**

**7. Warning**

**8. Rebuke**

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### 9. Entreaty

### 10. Forgiveness

## WHAT RESOURCES DO WE HAVE AS WE COMMUNICATE?

### 1. The indwelling Holy Spirit

### 2. A faithful marriage

“This is another thing you do. You are covering the Lord’s altar with tears, with weeping and groaning, because he no longer respects your offerings or receives them gladly from your hands. 14 And you ask, “Why?” Because even though the Lord has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, you have acted treacherously against her. She was your marriage partner and your wife by covenant. 15 Didn’t God make them one and give them a portion of spirit? What is the one seeking? Godly offspring. So watch yourselves carefully, so that no one acts treacherously against the wife of his youth. 16 “If he hates and divorces his wife,” says the Lord God of Israel, “he covers his garment with injustice,” says the Lord of Armies. Therefore, watch yourselves carefully, and do not act treacherously” (Mal. 2:13–16).

### 3. Natural affection

### 4. Intercessory prayer

## PREPARATION FOR NEXT LESSON:

- Read “Parents, Require Obedience of Your Children” by John Piper at [desiringgod.org/articles/parents-require-obedience-of-your-children](http://desiringgod.org/articles/parents-require-obedience-of-your-children)