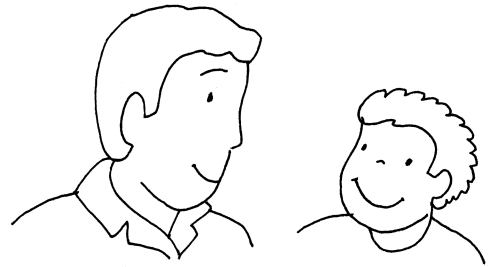


A CHECKLIST FOR SONS AND DAUGHTERS

Have I submitted to God and His plan for me by humbly respecting and submitting to my parents?

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." (Jeremiah 29:11)



Is God pleased with the way I have treated my parents today?

"Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord." (Colossians 3:20)

Have I earnestly prayed for my parents today?

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." (1 Timothy 2:1-2)



Am I aware of my parents' good qualities and have I sought to imitate those qualities?

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." (Hebrews 13:7)

Have I chosen to cheerfully obey my parents' commands today?

"I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments." (Psalm 119:60)

Have I willingly yielded to my parents' advice and opinions?

"The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise." (Proverbs 12:15)

Have I shown godly love and patience to my parents today?

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Ephesians 4:32)



Have I been negligent, lazy, or resistant in fulfilling my duties toward my parents?

"The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous is made plain." (Proverbs 15:19)

Have I been discontent or angry today under the God-ordained authority of my parents?

"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Proverbs 16:25)

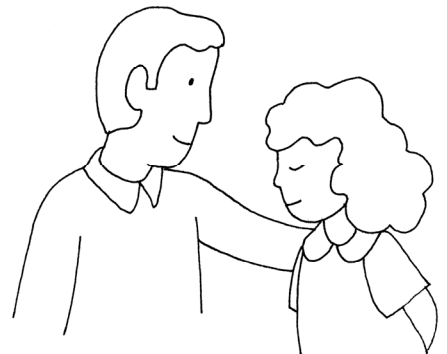
Have I rebelled against the loving correction of my parents today?

"He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding." (Proverbs 15:32)



Am I ready to acknowledge and turn from my sin?

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)



...AND FOR PARENTS:

I have just finished reading *The Shaping of a Christian Family*, by Elisabeth Elliot. As always, Mrs. Elliot has encouraged and challenged me with her words. What impressed me most in this book was the simple and yet profound truth that God works through the faithful, often mundane, efforts of parents who love God and desire to obey Him. Mrs. Elliot's recounting of her family life highlights the fact that her parents were normal, "un-glorious", folks who simply chose to take God's Word seriously. They loved their children, and recognized that God had loaned each son and daughter to them for a short time. They led with their faithful examples, consistently studied God's Word and read it to their children, and bathed their efforts in prayer. God proved Himself true to His Word. Their marriage produced six "arrows" that have continued in the faith of their parents.

Our task as parents is a serious one! We are given the opportunity to accurately portray to our children the fatherhood of our **heavenly** Father. We picture God to them in the everyday activities of life. We must constantly seek His wisdom and grace in this task.

- Draw near to your children. Know them, listen to them, talk to them. Spend time with them individually and with the family as a whole.
- Love unconditionally, not just when you feel like it.
- Be consistent. Don't allow moods to govern your decisions and discipline, but be guided by Scripture's truth.
- Discipline sin. Show the mercy that God shows, but don't overlook sin.
- Don't shield your children from the consequences of their sin. Allow them, when possible, to experience and learn from the natural outcomes of their disobedience.
- Be an example of what you teach. Don't attempt to discipline your child in areas in which you are unwilling to be disciplined. Grow in godliness and obedience with your children.
- Have plans for your children. Seek God's guidance as you establish goals for each of them. What are their weaknesses? How can you help them grow in these areas? What projects and experiences will challenge them toward greater maturity?
- As husband and wife, be united together as you care for your family.

The parent's job is challenging. Satan wants to discourage us, distract us, and mislead us. Be prepared for the battle. Arm yourself for the task:

- Study God's Word and pray. Seek wisdom from His Word, and pray for yourself, your spouse, and your children daily. Pray with your children.
- Don't wait until your children are "old enough to understand." Train early in habits of obedience, and point your children to God and His Word as your standard.
- Don't allow other interests or tasks to distract you from this very important job that you can only perform during these years of your life. Guard your time and affections.
- Don't take your child's sins personally. Recognize them as the manifestations of the sin nature your child inherited from Adam through you. Expect sin, and be ready to take advantage of each wrongdoing as an opportunity for instruction and training in righteousness.
- Don't give up. God is faithful. He will give you strength, wisdom, perseverance, and encouragement.
- Don't be afraid to lead your children in righteousness. Love them and God enough to faithfully teach and discipline them, wholly trusting God with the results.