

Found Faithful
A Building Faith @ Home message

Big Idea: Faithfulness is the key to building.

Text: **1 Corinthians 4: 1-2** (HCSB)

A person should consider us in this way: as servants of Christ and managers of God's mysteries. In this regard, it is expected of managers that each one of them be found faithful.

Me: Raising children, youth pastor, etc.

We: Article

Consistent Parenting

KidTips.com: http://www.kidtips.com/parenting_topics/Consistent.htm

There are few principles of parenting more important than consistency. Living in a predictable environment is comforting to children. It makes them feel secure. This is achieved when parents conform to a regular pattern of rules and routines. When children live in an inconsistent environment, where rules are enforced one day but not the next, and when bedtime is at 8:00 p.m. one night and 10:00 p.m. the next night, they become confused. They also act out more and are more difficult to discipline.

ARE YOU AN INCONSISTENT PARENT?

It may be something you never thought about. Do you make rules, but after an infraction you let the kids slide by without consequences? Do you say "no" to a request, but then back down and relent to a "yes" if your children persist and whine? Do you and your spouse disagree on the rules for the children? Does one spouse say "yes" and the other say "no" to the same request from your children? Do you make threats to your children, but you never really intend to follow through? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, there's probably room for improvement in the consistency department. With a firm tweak here and there in your parenting practices, you'll notice a positive change in the behavior of your children. However, if you have been inconsistent in many ways for a long time, it will take patience and time as your children test your newly defined boundaries. Hang in there!

TYPES OF CONSISTENT PARENTING

- **Consistency of Rules**

Explain your rules carefully and clearly to your children. Make sure they understand. Then explain the consequences for each rule. Most importantly, enforce the rules and consequences CONSISTENTLY. Yes, that means each time!

- **Consistency between Parents**

Present a united front to your children. Spouses need to communicate with each other about rules and consequences for the children. Children always look for a kink in the armor between the parents, so make sure you agree on the rules. Children learn how to

play one parent against the other, so parents should confer and agree on rules, requests, and discipline before sharing their decision with the children.

- **Consistent Routines**

Many family events require routines: bedtime, chores, meals, bath time, and school mornings. Children love routines (predictable events). For example, a child's bedtime may involve getting into pajamas, brushing teeth, using the toilet, story time, prayers and a bedtime song. Bedtime should be at the same time each evening. When routines are consistent, children respond better.

- **Divorced or Separated Parents**

Continuity is important to children, especially during and after a divorce. When children alternate between two residences after a divorce or separation, the transition is made easier when similar routines are maintained. It's extremely important for divorced parents to agree on a child's bedtime, rules and discipline, nutrition and family routines (as mentioned above). The more things are consistent in the two homes, the better for the child. No matter how contentious the relationship of the ex-spouses, the focus and needs of the children need to receive top priority. The book, *TEEN TIPS* by Tom McMahon, has a complete chapter on divorce and step parenting, including strategies and tips to help children and teens cope.

DISCIPLINE IN 3 EASY STEPS (an excerpt from KID TIPS, by Tom McMahon)

1- EXPLAIN YOUR RULES CLEARLY

Children need firm limits; they actually find security in having boundaries. Explain your rules clearly and in a way the child can understand. For instance, to avoid misunderstanding, I often ask my six-year old to repeat what I have explained. Of course, don't expect too much from your toddler; she cannot comprehend the meaning of rules and limits.

Children will respond better to rules if you explain the importance and reason for the rule. Try to remember how you felt when your parent gave you the old "Because I told you so" explanation.

2- EXPLAIN THE CONSEQUENCES

If your child balks at one of your rules or requests, explain what the consequence will be for not obeying. This offers your child a choice and, at least in our house, limits the verbal arguments. For example, my wife recently asked my daughter to pick up her toys by noon the next day. If she didn't, my wife explained, "I'll pick them up, but you won't see them for three days." This gave my daughter a choice: either pick up the toys or face the consequence.

3- BE CONSISTENT

My daughter decided to test my wife by not complying with her request to pick up the toys. As promised, promptly at noon the next day, my wife boxed up the toys. My daughter, wide-eyed in disbelief, watched silently as her mother disappeared with the toys. Since then, my daughter has picked up her toys when faced with a similar decision. This example illustrates a key concept about discipline which babies have learned by their first birthday: A rule is not a rule unless it is enforced consistently. They quickly and

skillfully learn how to test their parents and how to determine which rules they must take seriously.

Resources:

KidTips.com: http://www.kidtips.com/parenting_topics/Consistent.htm

Allpsych.com: <http://allpsych.com/journal/parentingskills.html>

Focus on the Family: www.focusonthefamily.com

http://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/effective_biblical_discipline/why_kids_misbehave.aspx

God:

Promises to the Faithful –

- 1- Preservation/Protection - **Psalm 31:23**

“Oh, love the LORD, all you His saints! For the LORD preserves the **faithful**, and fully repays the proud person.”

- 2- Blessed - **Proverbs 28:20**

A **faithful** man will abound with blessings, but he who hastens to be rich will not go unpunished.

- 3- Authority at Home & Provision - **Matthew 24:45**

“Who then is a **faithful** and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season?”

- 4- Ruler over Cities - **Matthew 25:23** (see Luke)

His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and **faithful** servant; you have been **faithful** over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

Earthly Example: Abraham

The majority of times the word faithful is used in Scripture refer to God Himself.

2 Timothy 2:11-13 (NKJV)

¹¹ *This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him.*

¹² *If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us.*

¹³ *If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.*

Jesus’ thoughts on Faithfulness:

Luke 16:10-13 (AMP)

¹⁰ He who is faithful in a very little [thing] is faithful also in much, and he who is dishonest and unjust in a very little [thing] is dishonest and unjust also in much.

¹¹ Therefore if you have not been faithful in the [case of] unrighteous mammon (sup>[a]deceitful riches, money, possessions), who will entrust to you the true riches?

¹² And if you have not proved faithful in that which belongs to another [whether God or man], who will give you that which is your own [that is, sup>[b]the true riches]?

¹³No servant is able to serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stand by and be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (riches, or ^[c]anything in which you trust and on which you rely).

A Fruit of the Spirit – identified with those who are Spirit-filled.

A wise man once said, “We become what we are committed to.” If we are committed to Christ .

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Examples: Hebrews 11: Will you be counted among the faithful? Will those you influence be people of consistency? Will your natural and spiritual children learn faithfulness from you?

Revelation 17:12-14 (NKJV)

¹²“The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. ¹³These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those *who are* with Him *are* called, chosen, and faithful.”