



“A true Mormon home is one in which if Christ should chance to enter, he would be pleased to linger and to rest” (President David O. McKay, *Gospel Ideals, The Improvement Era* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976], p. 169)

## Christ-like Parenting

Brigham Young University  
Campus Education Week, August 2007

## Parenting Traps

### 1. Criticism:

“Verbally berating children because they don’t perform well is no incentive whatsoever to perform well; rather, it simply heightens the child’s sense of inadequacy and dampens any desire to improve behavior.”



## Lessons from Paul

“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4)

“Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged” (Colossians 3:21).

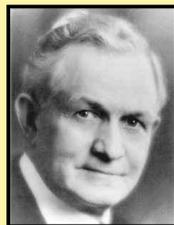
**Only discouraged children misbehave!!!!**

## Control Your Temper

“Now I charge you again, and I charge myself not to get angry. Never let anger arise in your hearts. No, Brigham, never let anger arise in your heart, never, never! Although you may be called upon to chastise and to speak to [your children] sharply, do not let anger arise in you, no, never!” (Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 14:156).

## Self Mastery

“I learned, when I was tempted to say the unkind, thoughtless thing, to put my tongue way back in my mouth and clamp my teeth down on it; and each time I did that, it was easier the next time not to say the unkind, hurtful thing” (David O. McKay, as cited in *Spiritual Roots of Human Relations* by Stephen R. Covey, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1970], p. 113).



## Parenting Traps

### 2. Sarcasm

“As with criticism, sarcasm has absolutely no healthy quality about it whatsoever. It is a desperate attempt to manage behavior in the absence of skills or competence.”



**Parenting Traps**

**3. Threats**

“Threats tend to be useless and counter-productive for at least three reasons. First, they are thoughtless, vacuous statements blurted out in moments of anger; second, they are almost never carried out because they are typically so outlandish that they couldn’t be carried out even if the parents wanted to; and third, they cause parents a lot of quandary as they try to wiggle out of the trap they get themselves into”

**Parenting Traps**

**4. Logic**

“Using logic is typically an ill-fated attempt to make adult wisdom attractive to a child, and seldom works. I have yet to have a parent tell me something like this: ‘Upon my explaining things logically to my child, my child said to me, ‘Mother, what a powerful point you have just made! I can now see the error in my thinking. From this day forward, I will make certain that my behavior is guided by your wise and mature counsel.’”



**Parenting Traps**

**5. Arguing**

“Arguing with a kid is like wrestling with a pig. They both get dirty but the pig loves it.”



**Parenting Traps**

**6. Questioning**

“Parents are forever questioning children about their inappropriate behavior: ‘When did you hit your sister?’ ‘What in the world are you doing?’ ‘How many times am I going to have to tell you to stop that?’ and so on. Unless parents need information to help solve a problem, they should never– I repeat, never– ask a child a question about his or her inappropriate behavior.”

**Parenting Traps**

**7. Verbal or Physical Force**

“Coercive attempts at managing behavior evidence themselves in the use of physical or verbal force more than in any other way, and the results are predictable: an inclination on the part of the children to avoid, escape, and/or countercoerce.



**Parenting Traps**

**8. Despair, Pleading, & Hopelessness**

“Consider this frequently heard parental lament to a noncompliant child: ‘I just don’t know what I am going to do with you. I have tried everything I know. I am simply out of ideas. I don’t have the foggiest notion what it’s going to take to get you to shape up. Do you have any ideas?’ (These ideas from Glenn I. Latham, *Parenting with Love*, [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1995], 56-66).

- **What do such comments prompt our children to do? Comply? Plan a family takeover?**



### Christ-like Parenting

“Before we can effectively teach our children *what* Christ would teach, we have to teach them *how* Christ would teach. His ministry was characterized by gentleness, love, patience, persuasion, charity, and long suffering (see Moroni 7:43-47). Furthermore, he was not easily provoked. We must literally be as Christ (see 3 Nephi 27:27). When we teach that way, we are safe to be with. We are attractive to our children. Our words are believed, our actions are emulated, and our values tend to become their values. They begin to identify with us” (Glenn I. Latham, *What’s A Parent To Do* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1997], 27).

### Christ-like Nature is Familiar to Them

- Before we were their parents, they were raised by Heavenly Parents in the pre-earth life
- A Christlike nature resonates with them because it is familiar to them
- A Christlike nature helps remind children of what they already know
- They seek it and crave it
- It was how it used to be
- Parents must be Christlike leaders



### Cake Anyone?

- Consider not only “what” we teach, but “how” we teach it!
- Many parents have the right message; unfortunately, their delivery is the problem




### Parents Kind and Dear

“If you wish your children to be taught in the principles of the gospel, if you wish them to love the truth and understand it, if you wish them to be obedient to and united with you, **love them!** And prove to them that you **do love them by your every word or act to them...** When you speak or talk to them, **do it not in anger, do it not harshly, in a condemning spirit. Speak to them kindly;** get them down and weep with them if necessary and get them to shed tears with you if possible. Soften their hearts; get them to feel tenderly toward you. Use no lash and no violence,... approach them with reason,

### Parents Kind and Dear

...with persuasion and love unfeigned. With these means, if you cannot gain your boys and your girls... there will be no means left in the world by which you can win them to yourselves. But, **get them to love the gospel as you love it,** to love one another as you love them; to love their parents as the parents love children. You can't do it any other way. **You can't do it by unkindness; you cannot do it by driving;** our children are like we are; we couldn't be driven; we can't be driven now.... You can't force your boys, nor your girls into heaven. **You may force them to hell, by using harsh means in the efforts to make them good, when you yourselves are not as good as you should be...** You can only correct your children by love, in kindness, by love unfeigned, by persuasion, and reason” (President Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1939], 316-317).

### The Divine Nature of Parenting

- D&C 4
- D&C 121:36-46
- Romans 5:5
- Ephesians 3:17
- 1 Nephi 11:22



“And he did exhort them then with all the feelings of a tender parent....” (1 Nephi 8:37).

**How Christ Would Parent**

**1. Christ would teach his children what is expected of them.**  
 We as parents have the primary responsibility for teaching our children (see D&C 68:25-28). Though the auxiliary programs of the Church can help, the main responsibility rests with parents.



**How Christ Would Parent**

**2. Christ would nurture his children with 'gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned; by kindness and pure knowledge' (D&C 121:41-42).** In all of the research I have seen on human behavior and how to shape, manage, and fix it, there is not one single shred of evidence that supports shouting, screaming, or hitting (including spanking) as defensible methods for child rearing...

**How Christ Would Parent**

**3. Christ would verbally express his love to his children.** 'As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love' (John 15:9). One way we can show our love to our children is simply to tell them often, 'I love you,' as Jesus did. Hearing those three words brings strength, security, and courage. How often do you tell your children that you love them?

**As Christ Would Parent**

"A friend told me his son once posed an interesting question to him: 'Dad, how come you only tell me you love me when you're mad at me?' The father said he analyzed his past actions and agreed with his son's assessment. He had shown greater love after his rebukes but forgot to tell his son when there was no problem. If we want our children to feel loved, we must tell them often when they are doing good things too!

"In one classic study, several thousand high school students were asked what they would most like to hear from their parents. The survey found that fifty percent of the students said they wanted most to know if their parents loved them. (Paul Popenoe, "Do Your Children Know You Love Them?" *Parents and Better Homemaking*, December 1965, pp. 43-45).

**How Christ Would Parent**

**4. Christ would also demonstrate his love through his actions.**  
 'And when Jesus had spoken these words he came again unto his disciples; and behold they did pray steadfastly, without ceasing, unto him; and he did smile upon them again; and behold they were white, even as Jesus' (3 Nephi 19:30). Jesus smiled at his disciples to show love for them. Facial expressions and gestures—a smile, wink, even a nod—can help show our love for our youth and acknowledge their worth and value to us. What methods or signs do you use to demonstrate your love to your children?



**How Christ Would Parent**

**5. Jesus would demonstrate kindness, compassion, and mercy.**

- 'Have ye any that are sick among you? Bring them hither. Have ye any that are lame, or blind, or halt, or maimed, or leprous, or that are withered, or that are deaf, or that are afflicted in any manner? Bring them hither and I will heal them, for I have compassion upon you; my bowels are filled with mercy' (3 Nephi 17:7).
- "Our children, like us, have bouts of loneliness, fear, depression, embarrassment, frustration, regret, and temptations. We must be there to heal their afflictions and pain with kindness, compassion, and mercy, just as Jesus did. Whatever our children need—help with a problem or assignment, an encouraging word, even a blessing—we can give them by following Christ's modeling.
- "The Prophet Joseph Smith expressed the value of friendship as he said, 'When persons manifest the least kindness and love to me, O what power it has over my mind, while the opposite course has a tendency to harrow up all the harsh feelings and depress the human mind' (*History of the Church* 5:24).

**How Christ Would Parent**

**6. Jesus would use physical touch.**



'And it came to pass that when Jesus had made an end of these sayings, he touched with his hand the disciples whom he had chosen, one by one, even until he had touched them all, and spake unto them as he touched them' (3 Nephi 18:36).

"Of the many ways we can show love to other family members, touch is one of the most powerful. Perhaps it is the most direct method of communicating love. Does it seem to you that loves flows when we hug, place an arm around another's shoulder, plant a kiss on their cheek, hold hands, or even share a handshake?"

**The Power of Touch**

"Studies show that while many parents give their infants and toddlers physical affection, hugging and kissing decreases with each passing year. By the time most children reach their teenage years, they get very little physical affection from their parents..."

"Have you ever stopped to consider how physical touch is used in the Lord's church today? Handshakes, blessings, anointings and sealings, ordinations, confirmations, baptisms, temple ordinances--all use touch to transfer power and love from the Savior and priesthood holder" (Randall A. Wright, "The Power of Love and Affection in Our Families," in *Eternal Families*, Eds. Douglas E. Brinley & Daniel K. Judd [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996], pp. 174-178).

**How Christ Would Parent**

**6. Christ would allow his children to exercise their moral agency and let consequences do the talking for him.**



When asked how he governed his people, Joseph Smith answered, 'I teach the people correct principles and they govern themselves' (as quoted in *Journal of Discourses* 10:57-58). **But he didn't say they always governed themselves well!**

**How Christ Would Parent**

**7. Finally, Christ would pray for his children unceasingly.** In Alma 34, Amulek instructed the Zoramites to 'cry unto [the Lord] in your houses, yea, over all your household, both morning, mid-day, and evening'" (Glenn I. Latham, "As Christ Would Parent," in D.E. Brinley & D.K. Judd (eds.) *Eternal Families* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996], 20-31).




**What the Savior wants your children to know!**



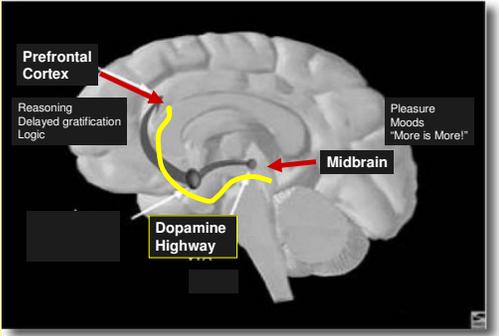
**INSPIRATION**

GENIUS IS ONE PERCENT INSPIRATION AND 99 PERCENT PERSPIRATION, WHICH IS WHY ENGINEERS SOMETIMES SMELL REALLY BAD.

## Each Day We Weigh Carefully



## Quick Science lesson



## Brother of Jared



And it came to pass that the brother of Jared did... according as the Lord had commanded.

And he cried again unto the Lord saying: O Lord, ... I have prepared the vessels for my people, and behold there is no light in them. Behold, O Lord, wilt thou suffer that we shall cross this great water in darkness?

And the Lord said unto the brother of Jared: *What will ye that I should do that ye may have light in your vessels?* For behold, ye cannot have windows, for they will be dashed in pieces; neither shall ye take fire with you, for ye shall not go by the light of fire.

For behold, ye shall be as a whale in the midst of the sea; for the mountain waves shall dash upon you. ...

And behold, I prepare you against these things... Therefore what will ye that I should prepare for you that ye may have light when ye are swallowed up in the depths of the sea?

## Problem Solving 101



- 1- What Happened?
- 2- What have you tried?
- 3- Have you prayed about it?
- 4- What do you feel you should do now?

## Example: Daughter being left out of a group of friends...

**Mom:** Wow, honey, I had no idea. *What happened?*

**Daughter:** I don't know, mom! I just know that they weren't First of all, I just know that they weren't with my friends. Pretty soon they started ignoring me. I didn't even do anything!

**Mom:** That would be really hard! *So what have you tried, so far?*

**Daughter:** I've tried to be nice and they just ignored me. I even wrote Mandy a note and she didn't write back!

**Mom:** I'm sorry. *Have you prayed about it?*

**Daughter:** No, they're really what's the problem?

**Mom:** Well, Heavenly Father can help you if you'll let him. Can we pray together? First I'll pray and then you pray, OK? Then we'll see what you feel you should do about it.

## Example #2: Kids cheating in 14 year old son's class. Their scores end up being higher



**Son:** So, dad, what do I do? If they go ahead and all cheat it could really hurt my final grade!

**Dad:** Well, I'm proud of you for not cheating. *What have you thought about doing?*

**Son:** I could go tell the teacher about them. Then they would all be mad at me. Nobody likes a snitch!

**Dad:** That's a pretty big bind. *What did you feel when you prayed about it?*

**Son:** I didn't. Heavenly Father doesn't care about my geometry score!

**Dad:** But he does love you and cares about you being honest.

**Son:** OK...

**Dad:** Pray about it tonight and listen for what you feel.

**Son:** But what if the answer is that I'm supposed to tell the teacher?

**Dad:** If the Lord tells you to tell the teacher, don't you think He knows everything will end up for your best good?

**Son:** I guess so.

**Dad:** Now, if that is the answer, I can't promise they won't be mad—just that it will be OK. You just have to be willing to do whatever He tells you do.

**Son:** Alright, Dad. I'll try it.