



Saint Clare of Assisi

CATHOLIC CHURCH

SIMPLE WISDOM: RAISING CHILDREN IN THE FAITH

Finding simple wisdom in scripture as it applies to practical life is less about mining scripture for easy principles to follow than about discovering the deeper framework for understanding the relationships and responsibilities we have in life that are related to what God desires for his people. We will not exhaust all that we might find in scripture as it relates to any given subject, but we will seek to discover the fundamental basis for understanding those relationships and responsibilities that can guide our actions as we work to live lives faithful to our creator, fulfilling our responsibilities to one another and his kingdom. You are invited to use these frameworks to explore additional ways God calls you to living in fidelity to his invitation to “know what is the hope to which he has called you,” and “to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called” (Ephesians 1.18; 4.1).

Write out your notes and responses to the questions below. Record insights gained in discussion. Consider sharing them as appropriate with your children. Return to them periodically as a reminder of the wisdom God has shared with you, adding to them as he continues to bless you with his wisdom and the grace to grow in your love for your children and to face the joys and challenges of life together in his kingdom.

Experiential reflection

- What victories and joys I have experienced raising my children?
- What responsibilities I have as I raise my children (to them, to Jesus, and to his church)?
- What does it mean to raise my children in faith in Jesus Christ? How will I measure the success of having done so?
- What are the challenges I have or anticipate as I attempt to raise my children in the faith?

Sources of wisdom

Deuteronomy 6.1-25

- What does God ask us to do with our children? How?
- What does he ask us to do ourselves that we then teach our children?
- What does it mean to fear God?
- Why does God say that it is important to share this wisdom with our children?

Proverbs 22.6 (see also 1.7-9; 2.1-2; 3.1-12; 4.1-2, 10; etc.)

- What does the proverb admonish us to do with our children? Why?
- How are children admonished to respond to their parents' efforts to share God and his wisdom with them?
- What does that admonishment say about how are we to fulfill our responsibility to our children and to God?

Ephesians 6.1-4 (see also 1.13-14; 2.19-22; 4.1-5.21)

- How are children admonished to respond to their parents and their efforts to share God and his wisdom with them?
- What does that admonishment say about how are we to fulfill our responsibility to our children and to God?
- What else are we admonished to avoid doing and to do as we raise our children?
- How are these roles related to Jesus and his relationship to the church (and what Paul explores about that relationship in the rest of his letter to the Ephesians)?

Living in wisdom

- How does the biblical wisdom we explored affirm the joy I have experienced and the good things I have done in raising my children in faith?
- How does the biblical wisdom we explored challenge me to look differently at my relationship with my children and the efforts I have or haven't made to raise them in faith?
- What does the biblical wisdom we explored tell me about how to face the challenges I am experiencing or anticipating in raising my children to know and fear God?
- What can I commit to do to meet those challenges based on the wisdom gained?