

314 they would have touched an answering chord in their hearts, and willing feet
315 and hands and hearts would all have readily obeyed them. **By controlling**
316 **themselves, and speaking kindly, and praising the children when they try**
317 **to do right, parents may encourage their efforts, make them very happy,**
318 **and throw over the family circle a charm which will chase away every**
319 **dark shadow and bring cheerful sunlight in.** {1T 385.1}

320 Do Not Neglect Your Home Duties

321 It is often necessary to command children to keep the way of the Lord. **There**
322 **is a blind affection that gives children the privilege of doing as they please.**
323 **Such love is not sanctified love. Those who manifest it do their children a**
324 **cruelty that eternity alone will reveal. The children are misguided; and the**
325 **evil of their undisciplined, unrestrained disposition is a curse in the home,**
326 **in the neighborhood, and in the church.** – {RH June 6, 1899 Par. 9} The
327 Lord will not vindicate the misrule of parents. **Today hundreds of children**
328 **swell the ranks of the enemy, living and working apart from the purpose of**
329 **God. They are disobedient, unthankful, unholy; but the sin lies at the door**
330 **of their parents.** Christian parents, thousands of children are perishing in their
331 sins **because of the failure of their parents to rule the home wisely.** If
332 parents were obedient to the unseen Leader of the armies of Israel, whose glory
333 was enshrouded in the pillar of cloud, the unhappy state of affairs now existing
334 in so many families would not be seen. – {RH June 6, 1899 Par. 10}

335 Be Wary of Too Much Indulgence and Disciplinary Passion

336 **God has opened to me what stands in the way of the conversion of youth**
337 **and children—their parents do not treat them aright. It is too much**
338 **indulgence and too much passion.** {Ms8a-1891.}

339 Seek Your Children’s Conversion

340 **When the will and ways of God become the will and ways of Seventh-day**
341 **Adventist parents, their children will grow up to love and honor and obey**
342 **God.** Satan will not be able to gain control of their minds, for they have been
343 educated to regard the Word of the Lord as supreme, and they will test every
344 experience that comes to them by the law and the testimony. “To the law and to
345 the testimony; if they speak not according to this work, it is because there is no
346 light in them.” [Isaiah 8:20.] {Lt356-1907.21}

347 **Set your own heart in order. An unreserved surrender to God will sweep**
348 **away the barriers that have so long defied the approaches of heavenly**
349 **grace.** Bring your lives into conformity to the will of Christ, and your children
350 will be won to Him. The world will take knowledge of them that they have
351 been with Jesus, and have learned of Him. In word and deed they will bear
352 witness to the power of His grace. – {ST November 11, 1903 Par. 8}

353 *These thoughts were compiled by Dan Augsburger of Path2Prayer Ministries.*
354 *Find more resources like this at discipleheart.com. Communicate with Dan via*
355 *discipleheart@protonmail.com or by calling 269 471 5415. Some Thoughts On*
356 *Parenting Flourishing Spiritual Children 2022*

Some Thoughts On Parenting Flourishing Spiritual Children

1 Introduction

2 The following thoughts are but a tiny fraction of gems on the topic of parenting
3 that might be shared from the writings of Ellen White. You will find much
4 more, in the compilations *Adventist Home* and *Child Guidance*, and in the more
5 than two hundred articles, manuscripts and letters that came from her pen. You
6 can also find more information at egwwritings.com and my website
7 discipleheart.com—Dan

8 Parenting is the Grandest Work

9 **The position of a parent is one of the most responsible on earth,** yet it is far
10 too lightly regarded by the majority of the world. The things which are
11 perishable receive their time, labor, and money, while the work which will be
12 enduring as eternity is made a secondary matter. **The future of the rising**
13 **generation is in the hands of parents; for, in a great measure, they hold**
14 **within their control the destiny of their children both for time and for**
15 **eternity. The salvation of the young depends almost wholly upon the**
16 **training they receive in childhood.** Christian parents, who believe the sacred
17 truth of God, are required to regulate their own conduct by the sanctifying
18 influence of that truth, and, by precept and example, impress lessons of
19 morality and religion upon their children. {ST December 19, 1878, Art. A, par.
20 1 }

21 **The Lord is served as much, yes, more, by the faithful home worker as by**
22 **the one who preaches the Word.** Fathers and mothers should realize that they
23 are the educators of their children. **Children are the heritage of the Lord, and**
24 **they should be trained and disciplined to form characters that the Lord**
25 **can approve. When this work is carried on judiciously, and with**
26 **faithfulness and prayer, angels of God will guard the family, and the most**
27 **commonplace life will be made sacred.** – {RH July 28, 1910 Par. 3}

28 The Mother Plays the Key Role

29 Next to God, **the mother’s power for good is the strongest known on**
30 **earth.** – {HR March 1, 1880 Par. 12}

31 The mother’s daily influence upon her children is preparing them for
32 everlasting life or eternal death. **She exercises in her home a power more**
33 **decisive than the minister in the desk, or even the king upon his throne.**
34 The day of God will reveal how much the world owes to godly mothers.... {ST
35 November 3, 1881, par. 8}

36 **If married men leave their wives to care for their children at home, the**

37 **wife and mother is doing fully as great and important a work as the**
38 **husband and father. Although one is in the missionary field, the other is a**
39 **home missionary, whose cares and anxieties and burdens frequently far**
40 **exceed those of the husband and father.** Her work is a solemn and important
41 one. It is to mould the minds and fashion the characters of her children, and
42 train them for usefulness here, and fit them for the future, immortal life. **The**
43 **husband in the open missionary field may receive the honors of men, while**
44 **the home toiler may receive no credit for her labor. But if she works for the**
45 **best interest of her family, to fashion their characters after the divine**
46 **model, the recording angel writes her name as one of the greatest**
47 **missionaries in the world.** God does not see things as man's finite vision
48 views them. {ST October 15, 1885, par. 3}

49 Father is the Lawmaker and Priest of the Household
50 All members of the family center in the father. He is the lawmaker, illustrating
51 in his own manly bearing the sterner virtues, energy, integrity, honesty,
52 patience, courage, diligence, and practical usefulness. **The father is in one**
53 **sense the priest of the household, laying upon the altar of God the morning**
54 **and evening sacrifice.** The wife and children should be encouraged to unite in
55 this offering and also to engage in the song of praise. **Morning and evening**
56 **the father, as priest of the household, should confess to God the sins**
57 **committed by himself and his children through the day.** Those sins which
58 have come to his knowledge, and also those which are secret, of which God's
59 eye alone has taken cognizance, should be confessed. **This rule of action,**
60 **zealously carried out by the father when he is present, or by the mother**
61 **when he is absent, will result in blessings to the family.** {2T 701.1}

62 The Husband is also the House-band of the Home, and is to Treasure, Respect
63 and Appreciate His Wife
64 **A true woman in the home is a treasure, and she should be respected and**
65 **appreciated.** The question is often asked, **Shall a wife have no will of her**
66 **own? The Bible plainly states that the husband is the head of the family.**
67 **"Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands." If this injunction**
68 **ended here, we might say that the position of the wife is not an enviable**
69 **one;** it is a very hard and trying position in very many cases, and it would be
70 better were there fewer marriages. Many husbands stop at the words, "Wives,
71 submit yourselves," but we will read the conclusion of the same injunction,
72 which is, "As it is fit in the Lord." [Colossians 3:18.] {Lt18b-1891.} ... **God**
73 **requires that the wife shall keep the fear and glory of God ever before her.**
74 **Entire submission is to be made only to the Lord Jesus Christ, who has**
75 **purchased her as His own child by the infinite price of His life.** God has
76 given her a conscience, which she cannot violate with impunity. Her
77 individuality cannot be merged in that of her husband, for she is the
78 **purchase of Christ.** It is a mistake to imagine that with blind devotion she is to
79 do exactly as her husband says in all things, when she knows that in so doing,
80 injury would be worked for her body and her spirit which have been ransomed
81 from the slavery of Satan. **There is one who stands higher than the husband**
82 **to the wife; it is her Redeemer, and her submission to her husband is to be**

267 **The training of children must be conducted on a different principle from**
268 **that which governs the training of irrational animals.** The brute has only to
269 be accustomed to submit to its master; but **the child must be taught to control**
270 **himself. The will must be trained to obey the dictates of reason and**
271 **conscience. A child may be so disciplined as to have, like the beast, no will**
272 **of its own, his individuality being lost in that of his teacher. Such training**
273 **is unwise, and its effect disastrous.** Children thus educated will be deficient in
274 firmness and decision. They are not taught to act from principle; the reasoning
275 powers are not strengthened by exercise. So far as possible, every child should
276 be trained to self-reliance. By calling into exercise the various faculties, he will
277 learn where he is strongest, and in what he is deficient. A wise instructor will
278 give special attention to the development of the weaker traits, that the child
279 may form a well-balanced, harmonious character. {RH January 10, 1882, par.
280 2} **In some schools and families, children appear to be well trained, while**
281 **under the immediate discipline, but when the system which has held them**
282 **to set rules is broken up, they seem to be incapable of thinking, acting, or**
283 **deciding for themselves. Had they been taught to exercise their own**
284 **judgment as fast and as far as practicable, the evil would have been**
285 **obviated.** But they have so long been controlled by parents or teachers as to
286 wholly rely upon them. He who seeks to have the individuality of his scholars
287 merged in his own, so that reason, judgment, and conscience shall be subject to
288 his control, assumes an unwarranted and fearful responsibility. **Those who**
289 **train their pupils to feel that the power lies in themselves to become men**
290 **and women of honor and usefulness, will be the most permanently**
291 **successful. Their work may not appear to the best advantage to careless**
292 **observers, and their labor may not be valued so highly as that of the**
293 **instructor who holds absolute control; but the after-life of the pupils will**
294 **show the results of the better plan of education.** {RH January 10, 1882, par.
295 3}

296 Do Not Discourage Your Children
297 **Some parents raise many a storm by their lack of self-control. Instead of**
298 **kindly asking the children to do this or that, they order them in a scolding**
299 **tone, and at the same time a censure or reproof is on their lips which the**
300 **children have not merited.** Parents, **this course pursued toward your**
301 **children destroys their cheerfulness and ambition. They do your bidding,**
302 **not from love, but because they dare not do otherwise.** Their heart is not in
303 the matter. It is a drudgery, instead of a pleasure, and this often leads them to
304 forget to follow out all your directions, which increases your irritation, and
305 makes it still worse for the children. **The faultfinding is repeated, their bad**
306 **conduct arrayed before them in glowing colors, until discouragement**
307 **comes over them, and they are not particular whether they please or not.** A
308 spirit of "I don't care" seizes them, and they seek that pleasure and enjoyment
309 away from home, away from their parents, which they do not find at home.
310 They mingle with street company and are soon as corrupt as the worst. — {1T
311 384.2} Upon whom rests this great sin? If home had been made attractive, if
312 the parents had manifested affection for their children, and with kindness found
313 employment for them, and in love instructed them how to obey their wishes,

222 **children's disobedience.** If every family professing to be the children of God
223 were indeed what they profess to be, what happiness would exist in the home!
224 Christ would be represented in the home life, and parents and children would
225 represent Him in the church. {Lt18b-1891.}

226 Discipline Wisely

227 **If you become angry and lose your temper, you forfeit that which no**
228 **mother or father can afford to lose—the respect of your children.** Never
229 scold yourself, or permit scolding in your home. **Never give your child a**
230 **passionate blow, unless you want him to learn to fight and quarrel.** As
231 parents you stand in the place of God to your children, and you are to be on
232 guard. {Ms32-1899} Parents, do not be abrupt and act from impulse. **Never**
233 **correct your child when you are provoked, for if you do this you will mold**
234 **him after your own image—impulsive, passionate, unreasonable.** You can
235 be firm without violent threatenings and scoldings. I have seen a mother snatch
236 from the hand of her child something that was giving it special pleasure. The
237 child did not know the reason of this, and naturally felt abused. Then followed
238 a quarrel between parent and child, and a sharp chastisement ended the scene as
239 far as outward appearance was concerned. **But that battle has left an**
240 **impression on the tender mind that will not be easily effaced.** I said to the
241 mother, You have wronged your child deeply; you have hurt his soul, and lost
242 his confidence. How this will be restored I know not. {Ms32-1899} This
243 mother acted unwisely. She did not move cautiously, reasoning from cause to
244 effect. **Her harsh, injudicious management stirred up the worse passions in**
245 **the heart of her child, and on every similar occasion these passions were**
246 **aroused and strengthened. This is the worst policy that can be used in**
247 **family government, for this advanced age and maturity of strength**
248 **warring against a helpless, ignorant little child confirms rebellion in the**
249 **heart.** {Ms32-1899} **But, you ask, shall I never punish my child? Whipping**
250 **may be essential when every other resort fails; but before you cause your**
251 **child physical pain, you will, if you are a Christian father or mother, reveal**
252 **the love you have for your erring little one.**

253 Bend the Will

254 **Too often parents follow a course that develops evil in the child. Harsh and**
255 **severe, they drive him to rebellion.** Then they wonder why he has traits of
256 character that are so unlovely, when they try so hard to break his stubborn will.
257 **It is in trying to break his will that they make their mistake. The child's**
258 **will is to be trained, bent, not broken.** – {RH July 8, 1902 Par. 7}

259 **The severe training of youth, without properly directing them to think and**
260 **act for themselves as their own capacity and turn of mind will allow, that**
261 **by this means they may have growth of thought, feelings of self-respect,**
262 **and confidence in their own ability to perform, will ever produce a class**
263 **who are weak in mental and moral power.** And when they stand in the world
264 to act for themselves they will reveal the fact that they were trained like the
265 animals, and not educated. Their wills, instead of being guided, were forced
266 into subjection by the harsh discipline of parents and teachers. – {CCh 192.6}

83 **rendered as God has directed—“as it is fit in the Lord.”** {Lt18b-1891.}
84 **When husbands require the complete subjection of their wives, declaring that**
85 **women have no voice or will in the family, but must render entire**
86 **submission, they place their wives in a position contrary to the Scripture. ...**
87 **It is no evidence of manliness in the husband for him to dwell constantly**
88 **upon his position as head of the family. It does not increase respect for him**
89 **to hear him quoting Scripture to sustain his claims to authority. It will not**
90 **make him more manly to require his wife, the mother of his children, to**
91 **act upon his plans as if they were infallible. The Lord has constituted the**
92 **husband the head of the wife to be her protector; he is the house-band of**
93 **the family, binding the members together, even as Christ is the head of the**
94 **church and the Saviour of the mystical body.** Let every husband who claims
95 to love God carefully study the requirements of God in his position. **Christ's**
96 **authority is exercised in wisdom, in all kindness and gentleness; so let the**
97 **husband exercise his power and imitate the great Head of the church.**
98 {Lt18b-1891.}

99 The Mother Needs the Father's Understanding and Support

100 **Many husbands do not sufficiently understand and appreciate the cares**
101 **and perplexities which their wives endure,** generally confined all day to an
102 unceasing round of household duties. **They frequently come to their homes**
103 **with clouded brows, bringing no sunshine to the family circle. If the meals**
104 **are not on time, the tired wife, who is frequently housekeeper, nurse, cook,**
105 **and housemaid, all in one, is greeted with fault-finding.** The exacting
106 husband may condescend to take the worrying child from the weary arms of its
107 mother that her arrangements for the family meal may be hastened; but **if the**
108 **child is restless, and frets in the arms of its father, he will seldom feel it his**
109 **duty to act the nurse, and seek to quiet and soothe it.** He does not pause to
110 consider how many hours the mother has endured the little one's fretfulness,
111 but calls out impatiently, "Here, mother, take your child." Is it not his child as
112 well as hers? Is he not under a natural obligation to patiently bear his part of the
113 burden of rearing his children? – {ST December 6, 1877 Par. 2} ... In most
114 families there are children of various ages, some of whom need not only the
115 attention and wise discipline of the mother, but also the sterner, yet
116 affectionate, influence of the father. Few fathers consider this matter in its due
117 importance. **They fall into neglect of their own duty, and thus heap grievous**
118 **burdens upon the mother, at the same time feeling at liberty to criticise**
119 **and condemn her actions according to their judgment. Under this heavy**
120 **sense of responsibility and censure, the poor wife and mother often feels**
121 **guilty and remorseful for that which she has done innocently or ignorantly,**
122 **and frequently when she has done the very best thing possible under the**
123 **circumstances.** Yet when her wearisome efforts should be appreciated and
124 approved, and her heart made glad, she is obliged to walk under a cloud of
125 sorrow and condemnation, because her husband, while ignoring his own duty,
126 expects her to fulfill both her own and his to his satisfaction, regardless of
127 preventing circumstances. {ST December 6, 1877, par. 3} **He feels that his**
128 **wife belongs to him, and is subject to his order and dictation, and liable to**
129 **fall under his disapprobation. Who gives him this right of dictation and**

130 **condemnation?** Does the law of God, which commands him to love God with
131 all his heart and his neighbor as himself? Does he find it among the injunctions
132 of the apostles, who exhort: “Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter
133 against them”? No, there is no moral or religious defense for such an unjust
134 authority. {ST December 6, 1877, par. 4}

135 Be Wary of Overbearing

136 **Parents cannot with safety be in any way overbearing. They must not show**
137 **a masterly, criticizing, fault-finding spirit. The words they speak, the tone**
138 **in which they speak, are lessons either for good or ill, to their children.**
139 **Fathers and mothers, if cross words fall from your lips, you are teaching**
140 **your children to speak in the same way, and the refining influence of the**
141 **Holy Spirit is made of none effect. Patient continuance in well doing is**
142 **essential if you would do your duty to your children. {Lt8a-1896.7} ... My**
143 **brother, your overbearing words hurt your children.** As they advance in
144 years, their tendency to criticize will grow. Faultfinding is corrupting your life,
145 and is extending to your wife and to your children. **Your children are not**
146 **encouraged to give you their confidence, or to acknowledge their faults,**
147 **because they know that your stern rebuke is sure to follow. Your words are**
148 **often as a desolating hail, which breaks down tender plants. It is**
149 **impossible to estimate the harm thus done.** Your children practice deception
150 in order to avoid the hard words you speak. They will evade the truth to escape
151 censure and punishment. A hard, cold command will do them no good. Bind
152 your children to your heart. Let the Bible be opened before them, and a “Thus
153 saith the Lord” impressed on their hearts. One higher than human father or
154 mother addresses all children. {Lt8a-1896.13} ... Your wife is not spared. If
155 she makes a mistake, she is criticized and censured. The tree which should bear
156 grapes produces wild berries. Sister _____ is becoming nervous and fractious.
157 She feels her lack of ability and strength to manage her children. She is losing
158 her sweet disposition, her patience and forbearance. If this continues, the
159 children will have little love for their parents. **The mother should hear words**
160 **of encouragement, not of criticism, faultfinding, and censure.**
161 {Lt8a-1896.14}

162 Maintain Unity in Family Government

163 The father is to be the houseband of the family. This is his position, and if he is
164 a Christian, he will maintain family government. In every respect his authority
165 is to be recognized. **In many families the father’s authority is never fully**
166 **acknowledged, and a series of excuses are offered for the disobedience of**
167 **the children.** In many families the daily life is one of variance, full of the
168 counterworking of the father against the mother and the mother against the
169 father. **The mother thinks the father unnecessarily severe and exacting.**
170 **Why?—Because the children do not acknowledge and reverence the father,**
171 **who, if he is a Christian, represents the divine authority of God, whose**
172 **vicegerent he is.** The father is to carry out the gracious designs of God, and
173 establish his family in upright principles, that they may have virtuous and well-
174 balanced characters. – {RH March 13, 1894 Par. 1} **If fathers and mothers**
175 **are at variance, one working against the other to counteract each other’s**

176 **influence, the family will be in a demoralized condition, and neither the**
177 **father nor the mother will receive the respect and confidence that are**
178 **essential to a well-governed family. The mother will leave the impression**
179 **upon the minds of the children that the father is too severe or is needlessly**
180 **particular.** Children are quick to discern anything that will cast a reflection
181 upon the rules and regulations of a household, especially those regulations that
182 restrict their actions. Would that parents would work in harmony, guiding their
183 children in the fear of God, and remembering that they are his agents. The
184 family is a divine institution, and parents should be wise, judicious teachers of
185 their little ones. Children are to be patiently instructed, line upon line. {RH
186 March 13, 1894 Par. 2} **What strange mismanagement they witness in a**
187 **family where father and mother are at variance! The tones of the voice of**
188 **father and mother, their looks, their words,—all make it manifest that they**
189 **are not united in the management of their children. The father casts**
190 **reflections upon the mother, and leads the children to hold in disrespect**
191 **the mother’s tenderness and affection for the little ones. The mother thinks**
192 **she is compelled to give large affection to the children, to gratify and**
193 **indulge them, because she thinks the father is harsh and impatient, and**
194 **she must work to counteract the influence of his severity.** – {RH March 13,
195 1894 Par. 3} **O how God is dishonored in a family where there is no true**
196 **understanding as to what constitutes family discipline, and children are**
197 **confused as to what is discipline and government.** It is true that too harsh
198 discipline, too much criticism, unrequired laws and regulations, lead to
199 disrespect of authority, and, to the disregarding finally of those regulations that
200 Christ would have fulfilled. The lack of family government leads to the
201 destruction of confidence in wise regulations in the family economy. Parents
202 should themselves be converted, and know what it is to be in submission to
203 God’s will, as little children, bringing into captivity their thoughts to the will of
204 Jesus Christ, before they can rightly represent the government that God
205 designed should exist in the family.— {RH March 13, 1894 Par. 4}

206 Teach Respect Through Example and Precept

207 **Children are to be taught to respect their father and mother, and this**
208 **education is to be given them by example as well as by precept. When the**
209 **father gives kind attention to the mother, and the mother shows reverence**
210 **for the father, the children will be educated to love and reverence their**
211 **parents.** {Lt18b-1891.}

212 Don’t Provoke and Confirm Your Children in Evil

213 **Great care should be exercised lest children shall be treated in a way to**
214 **provoke obstinacy and rebellion. Many parents, because of their own want**
215 **of self-control, arouse the worst passions of their children’s hearts. They**
216 **correct them in anger, and confirm them in their evil, instead of drawing**
217 **them from the snare of Satan by correction administered in gentleness and**
218 **love.** {Lt18b-1891.} **Many parents professing to be Christians are not**
219 **converted. Christ does not abide in their hearts by faith. Their harshness,**
220 **their imprudence, their unsubdued tempers, disgust their children and**
221 **make them averse to all their religious instruction; but this is no excuse for**