

SESSION 6: DISCIPLINE PATIENTLY

- **View Video #6:** 5 minutes
- **Small Group Discussion:** 5 minutes

Proverbs 29:17 says, “Discipline your son and he will give you rest; he will give delight to your heart.”

Consistently teaching, correcting, and disciplining our children can be exhausting work. We can easily give in to the temptation to let things go we should address or to “parent” by simply barking orders, and neither of these is an acceptable option. Instead, we must patiently and consistency discipline our children. This takes time and is definitely not the easy way out, but it will train the hearts of our children and be better for them in the long run. See the Ignite Purpose parenting class for more info.

- **Discuss how patient you are with your wife and children.** Remember, the modeling necessary starts with how you treat your wife!

Always provide closure after an unpleasant interaction by reassuring your son or daughter of your love. Don't ever leave your child wondering, **Does Dad still love me?** As mentioned last week when we discussed repentance, If you slipped up and lost your temper in a way that was hurtful to your child, *be quick to apologize and seek forgiveness.* Your children don't need a perfect parent, but they do need a parent who will teach them how to restore relationships. Forgive yourself and show yourself grace. And be sure you have forgiven your children if needed – you don't want to become bitter toward them.

Learn from your experience so you'll do better next time. Through your spiritual growth, work at building awareness of the feelings and physical signs that tell you you're growing angry, and plan a calming strategy to use next time.

- **Share a specific example that your group can learn from.**

Another reason that we “practically” lose our patience is from what we covered in earlier sessions, and that is BUSYNESS! Poor time management can create a lot of stress and frustration in a family. If you're often running behind schedule, **work hard on planning better.** Learn to call ahead and apologize when you expect to arrive late, so you won't feel quite so stressed about getting the kids in the car. Keep your children informed about each day's activities. Unclear communication or unfulfilled expectations that leave a child disappointed or confused can trigger bad behavior. If you feel pushed for time, reviewing your priorities with your wife might be a good idea.

- **Share about how you can adjust your schedule to be less stressed.**

✓ **Homework:**

Focus on the **FIRE Journaling Method** and it will give you more insights on how to be more patient. Review these practical tips on how to maintain more patience with your family.

1. **Speak slowly and softly.** When you feel your anger rising, slow your speech way down and talk quietly. This will help you resist the urge to shout. Don't lecture – it will make you more upset. Simply say to your child, I'm feeling really upset/angry/frustrated right now. I need a few moments to calm down before I deal with this situation. This lets your child know that there's going to be a "pause" in the proceedings. Naming your emotions in front of your child is important too. In effect, you're sending your child the message, Watch and learn – this is how to deal with anger.
2. **Take 10 deep breaths.** Rehearse a verse of Scripture like James 1:5 or Romans 12:2. Then pray, asking the Holy Spirit to help you put self-oriented thoughts aside and respond in a way that lovingly meets your child's needs and nurtures their emotional and spiritual growth.
3. **Remove yourself from the situation if needed** (provided your children will be safe in your absence). Keep a stash of calming Scripture memory verses in the bathroom (or another calm-down retreat, or in your purse or wallet) and pray through them until you feel more under control.
4. **Don't expect too much from your children!** Remind yourself that you are the parent, and responsible before God to show your child a better way.
5. **Dig for the truth.** *Anger is a secondary emotion.* When you feel yourself getting upset, listen carefully to your thoughts to reveal the primary emotion underlying your reaction. *Is it fear? Resentment? Hurt? Grief? Disappointment? Stress?* For example, you might be thinking, If my kids don't leave me alone, I'll never meet my deadline. Your children didn't set your work deadline, so be honest about who really owns that problem.
6. **Lighten up and channel your inner comic.** Learn to laugh with your kids first, before you talk about how they might do better next time.
7. **Call an Ignite Purpose friend for two minutes.** A brief chat with another "Fired-Up Father" will help you put the situation in perspective and get rightly "FIRED-UP" again.
8. **Count your blessings.** Rehearse in your mind all the things you love about your child/children. This moment of frustration will soon pass.
9. **Ask your kids to help!** Once you've told your kids, I'm feeling very frustrated right now, ask them, What do you think I should do? Their cute answers may just melt your heart. At the very least, you've got them actively engaged in thinking about good ways to manage their own anger.