

Parenting Like Hannah

Raising Teachable (Christian) Kids

Ask any educator what makes a successful student and the answer could be summed up in one word – teachable. Have you ever tried to teach something to someone who had no intention of learning from you? It is one of the most frustrating experiences you will ever have. You can be the best, most successful educator that has ever lived, but you cannot force someone to learn what you are trying to teach them.



There are natural consequences built in when a student in school refuses to learn. If bad grades aren't motivation enough, there may also be disciplinary consequences imposed by school leaders to emphasize the importance of being teachable. For children and teens who are being taught about God and the Bible in church classes, however, there don't appear to be any immediate consequences. Grades aren't given. Parents don't seem to care enough to even do much when their children aren't being taught anything of value, much less examine whether or not they are learning what is being taught.

Or you and your spouse may have found yourself frustrated when trying to teach your children about God at home. They may seem uninterested in learning what you are trying to teach them or are perhaps openly antagonistic about your attempts to teach. It may feel like a hopeless situation. Your kids can't

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Whether or not your children are teachable has more to do with their character than what is being taught. Focusing on this list of character traits and behaviors will make it easier for you and others to teach your children about God (or about math for that matter.) Teachable children and teens are....

1. **Good listeners.** If your children don't listen carefully when they are being instructed, much of the information will be missed. There are lots of fun activities you can do to help improve your children's listening skills.
2. **Humble.** If your children think they are smarter than the person teaching them, they will rarely learn anything. Regularly reinforce that everyone has something to teach us – even if it is an example of how not to live our lives. They can only learn these sometimes critical lessons if they are humble.
3. **Curious.** Learning is fueled by curiosity and master teachers know how to get students curious about a topic. If your kids are encouraged to be naturally curious, however, it won't matter if their teacher knows how to spark their curiosity. They will already be curious.
4. **Tenderhearted.** A tenderhearted child wants to please God. They want to learn how to please God. A child whose heart is hardening doesn't care how God feels or about learning what He might want from them.
5. **Independent learners.** Studies have shown young people need to be engaged spiritually an average of 14 hours a week in order to grow to be faithful, productive Christians as adults. They can't possibly get it all from Bible classes or even you. They need to be independently engaged in spiritual disciplines like reading scripture, prayer, meditating on scripture, etc.
6. **"Growth mindset."** For our purposes, this means that they are aware God wants them to continue to grow spiritually. They will never reach perfection, but they should always remain focused on growing as Christians.
7. **Life long learners.** Connected to having a growth mindset, a life long learner realizes there is always something new to learn, understand or practice in the Bible – even if they have read it many times.
8. **Motivated to please God.** The motivation to learn scripture like one would a subject in school will only help to a point. To really learn and use what God wants them to requires a strong motivation to please God – even when it is counter cultural, causes problems in their lives or goes against what they selfishly desire.

Are you raising teachable children? Working on this list of attributes can make it much more likely your children will learn and use what God wants them to know and live.

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