

5 Encouraging Ways to Help Your Kids Stand for Holiness

One of our subscribers pointed out the fact that if we are raising our children to stand for what is right, then we are raising them to be a minority. A minority is a hard place to be, and it's a hard position to put our children in—even though we know that it's the right approach to take. If, then, we do choose to raise our children to be people of integrity, then it's also incumbent on us to equip them for the task.

Author Flannery O'Connor put it this way with her timeless insight: "You have to push as hard as the age that pushes against you." O'Conner was talking about not only owning values, but also having the resources to make sure they stick in a world that doesn't always offer much encouragement to those who are different. Do your children have the strength to push back against all the cultural pressures? Here are five ways to help your kids stand up for what's right.

1. They have to know what's right.

Teaching and training children is fundamental to family life. So let's start by making sure our children are clear about integrity, and that they know first hand the source of what is right and wrong and what we say we believe.

2. Practice talking about values, ideals and standards.

Just like our lessons in school, learning what is right becomes easier to articulate via practice. Talk about what is right. Be deliberate about identifying "teachable moments." Practice asking hard questions, and then expect your children to explain themselves so they'll be ready when it becomes necessary (and it will).

3. Practice right behavior as a family.

It's more practical to stand for what is right when the family stands with you, when "doing right" is a family value. The first-century writer James once said, "But a man may say, 'You have faith and I have works.' Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works" (James 2:18). James understood how important it is to live our values and integrity out loud.

4. Pick them up gently when they fall.

We all fail to stand for what is right in varying degrees. So be a compassionate teacher at home. Your job as a dad is to lead, not drive, your children. So pick them up when they fall, comfort them, encourage them and be their strength.

5. Make sure your children learn to respect people with different values.

Your children are different. So teach them to respect differences in others. Our children need their peers to know that they love and respect them as people, even while they cannot/will not compromise their own values. This is tricky, but the ability to survive is often tied to humility. Plus, we can't expect to gain respect if we're not willing to offer it in return.

What is an example of a time you stood up for what was right that you can use to teach your kids? {eo}

This article originally appeared at .