



PARENTING — WITH — *Love,* STABILITY, — AND — WISDOM



A PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN PARENTING
CURRICULUM FOR SINGLE MOMS
BUILDING STRONGER HOMES AND HEALTHIER FAMILIES



LOVE
THAT LEADS



STABILITY
THAT BUILDS



WISDOM
THAT GUIDES



FAITH
THAT STRENGTHENS



A HOME
THAT FLOURISHES

— FAITH. PURPOSE. STRENGTH. —

Contents

Twelve Parenting Sessions

Session 1: Motherhood With Hope	5
Session 2: Parenting Under Stress	20
Session 3: Understanding My Child's Age and Stage	34
Session 4: Understanding Trauma and My Child's Behavior	47
Session 5: Connection Before Correction	61
Session 6: Helping My Child With Big Feelings	75
Session 7: When Mom Feels Overwhelmed	88
Session 8: Routines That Bring Peace	106
Session 9: Safe People, Safe Homes, and Body Safety	119
Session 10: Phones, Screens, and Online Safety	135
Session 11: AI, Apps, and Digital Wisdom	149
Session 12: School, Childcare, and Attendance	165

Miscellaneous Handouts	181
-------------------------------	------------

The next page lists the supplemental handouts included after the twelve sessions.

Supplemental Handouts

1. Words That Calm Instead of Escalate	182	17. What My Child's Behavior May Be Saying	200
2. I Statements for Mothers and Children	183	18. Safe People Checklist	201
3. What to Say When My Child Says Hard Things	184	19. Body Safety Rules for Children	202
4. Apology and Repair Words	185	20. Questions to Ask Before My Child Goes Somewhere	203
5. Before I Correct My Child Checklist	186	21. Emergency Contact and Safety Plan	204
6. Calm Discipline Steps	187	22. Family Screen Rules	205
7. Consequences That Teach	188	23. Online Safety Steps for Children	206
8. Behavior Detective Sheet	189	24. AI Safety for Children	207
9. Morning Routine Chart	190	25. Questions to Ask About Apps and Games	208
10. Bedtime Routine Chart	192	26. Questions to Ask My Child's Teacher	209
11. After-School Routine Chart	193	27. Backpack and Folder Check Sheet	210
12. Weekly Family Planner	194	28. Attendance Matters Reminder Sheet	211
13. Simple Family Rules Poster	195	29. Childcare Communication Sheet	212
14. My Calm-Down Plan	196	30. Prayers to Pray Over My Child	213
15. My Child's Calm-Down Choices	197	31. Scripture Encouragement for Mothers	214
16. Feelings Words Chart	198	32. Blessing Words to Speak to My Child	215
		33. Certificate of Completion	216

PARENTING WITH LOVE, STABILITY, AND WISDOM

Residential Parenting Curriculum

Instructor Guide and Printable Mother's Handout

SESSION 1

90 Minutes

Session 1: Motherhood With Hope

A 90-Minute Parenting Class for Single Mothers in a Residential Program

Session Goal

This session helps each mother begin the parenting curriculum with hope instead of shame. It sets a respectful tone for a required class and reminds mothers that parenting growth happens one faithful step at a time.

Document Type	Professional Instructor Guide with a Separate Printable Mother's Handout
Target Audience	Single mothers living in a residential program who may be parenting through stress, poverty, trauma, recovery, family instability, separation from children, limited support, or the process of rebuilding their lives.
Suggested Class Length	90 minutes
Main Scripture	Psalm 127:3 - "Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him."

Learning Objectives

1. Understand that parenting growth is a process, not a demand for perfection.
2. Identify at least one strength they already have as a mother.
3. Describe the kind of home environment they want to build for their child.
4. Practice one calm, hopeful response to a child's emotional statement.
5. Create a personal parenting hope statement.
6. Complete one simple connection assignment with their child during the week.

Materials Needed

- Bible or printed Scripture verse
- Index cards or cardstock
- Pens, markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- Stickers or simple craft supplies
- Copies of participant handout: My Parenting Hope Statement
- Whiteboard or chart paper
- Tissue box
- Optional: soft worship music during reflection time

90-Minute Class Schedule

Time	Section
0-5 minutes	Opening Welcome
5-8 minutes	Opening Prayer
8-18 minutes	Fun Class Activity: My Motherhood Word Card
18-33 minutes	Scripture and Teaching
33-45 minutes	Group Discussion
45-65 minutes	Role Play by Child Age Group
65-78 minutes	Practical Activity: My Parenting Hope Statement
78-85 minutes	Review Questions
85-88 minutes	Homework Assignment
88-90 minutes	Closing Encouragement and Prayer

PART 1 | INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

Leader script, teaching points, role play, and classroom flow

Opening Welcome

Time: 0-5 Minutes

Leader Script

Good morning, everyone. I am so thankful you are here today.

Before we begin, I want to say something very clearly. This parenting class is part of the program, and I understand that it is required. But even though it is required, I do not want this class to feel like punishment. This class is not here to embarrass you, shame you, or make you feel like you have failed.

This class is here to strengthen you.

Every mother needs encouragement. Every mother needs tools. Every mother has moments when she wishes she had responded differently, spoken more gently, stayed calmer, or known what to do. Parenting is not easy for anyone, and it can be especially hard when you are carrying stress, trying to rebuild your life, healing from painful experiences, or parenting without the support you wish you had.

In this class, we are going to talk about real parenting. We are going to talk about tired mornings, crying children, tantrums, school issues, bedtime struggles, family conflict, screens, safety, discipline, and the pressure mothers feel.

But we are also going to talk about hope.

We are going to talk about how to connect with your child, how to respond more calmly, how to build routines, how to set boundaries, how to protect your child, how to repair after mistakes, and how to trust God for wisdom one day at a time.

You do not have to be a perfect mother to be a growing mother.

Today's session is called Motherhood With Hope.

Setting a Safe Tone

Leader Script

Before we go any further, I want us to understand the spirit of this class.

This is a learning space. That means we are not here to judge one another. We are not here to compare stories. We are not here to decide who is a good mom or a bad mom.

We are here to learn.

Some of you may feel proud of the way you parent in certain areas. Some of you may feel discouraged. Some of you may be separated from your children right now. Some of you may have your children with you every day. Some of you may be trying to rebuild trust. Some of you may be learning how to parent while also healing from things that happened in your own childhood.

Wherever you are starting from, you are welcome in this class.

We will speak respectfully. We will listen kindly. We will not shame one another. We will practice real skills together. And when something feels hard, we will remember that growth takes time.

Opening Prayer

Time: 5-8 Minutes

Leader Script

Let's begin with prayer.

Prayer

Lord, thank You for each mother in this room. Thank You for her life, her story, her child, and the opportunity to grow.

Some mothers may come into this class feeling tired. Some may feel nervous. Some may feel defensive because this class is required. Some may feel hopeful. Some may feel unsure. Lord, You know every heart.

Help this room become a place of grace, honesty, learning, and encouragement. Help each mother understand that she is not alone. Give us wisdom for the hard parts of parenting. Give us patience when we are tired. Give us courage to learn new ways. Give us humility when we need to grow. And give us hope for our children and our families.

We ask You to guide this class and use it to bring more peace, safety, and love into each home. In Jesus' name, amen.

Fun Class Activity: My Motherhood Word Card

Time: 8-18 Minutes

Purpose

This activity helps mothers begin with hope and personal reflection. It also gives the instructor insight into how the mothers view themselves and what they desire for their parenting.

Give each participant an index card or small piece of cardstock. Ask each mother to choose one word that describes the kind of mother she wants to become.

- Patient
- Loving
- Peaceful
- Strong
- Gentle
- Faithful
- Steady
- Wise
- Safe
- Present
- Encouraging
- Calm

Participants may decorate the card with markers, crayons, stickers, or simple designs.

Leader Script

We are going to begin with a simple activity.

Each of you will receive an index card. On that card, I want you to write one word that describes the kind of mother you want to become.

This is not about whether you feel like that word describes you perfectly today. This is about the direction you want to grow.

Maybe your word is patient because you want to become slower to anger. Maybe your word is peaceful because you want your home to feel calmer. Maybe your word is strong because you are trying to rebuild your life. Maybe your word is gentle because you want your child to remember your love more than your frustration. Maybe your word is faithful because you want to keep showing up, even when parenting feels hard.

There is no wrong word as long as it gives you hope. Take a few minutes to write your word and decorate your card.

While Participants Work

Leader May Say

As you work on your card, think about this question quietly: What kind of mother do I want my child to remember? Not perfect. Not flawless. But what kind of mother do you want to become?

Optional Sharing

Leader Script

Would anyone like to share the word you chose? You do not have to explain it unless you want to. You can simply say the word.

Leader responses: Thank you for sharing that. That is a beautiful word. That word shows hope. That is something worth growing toward.

Scripture and Teaching

Time: 18-33 Minutes

Main Scripture

Psalm 127:3 - "Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him."

Leader Script

Our Scripture for today is Psalm 127:3: Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him.

This verse reminds us that children matter deeply to God. Children are not interruptions to God. They are not invisible to Him. They are not forgotten by Him.

Your child matters to God. And you matter to God as your child's mother.

That is important because sometimes motherhood can feel heavy. It can feel like constant responsibility, constant noise, constant needs, constant pressure, and constant guilt.

Sometimes a mother may think: I am not enough. I have made too many mistakes. I do not know how to do this. My child deserves better than me. I have already messed things up.

But today we are going to begin with hope. God is not finished with you. God is not finished with your child. God is not finished with your family.

Teaching Point 1: Motherhood Is a Calling, Not a Demand for Perfection

Leader Script

One of the first things we need to understand is this: Motherhood is a calling, but it is not a demand for perfection.

A calling means God has entrusted something valuable to you. Your child is valuable. Your influence is valuable. Your words matter. Your actions matter. Your presence matters.

But being called to motherhood does not mean you will always know what to do. It does not mean you will never get tired. It does not mean you will never need help.

A good mother is not a perfect mother. A good mother is a growing mother.

A growing mother can say: I need to learn. I need support. I need to apologize. I need to calm down. I need to try again. I need God's help. That is not weakness. That is wisdom.

Teaching Point 2: Shame Does Not Build Strong Mothers

Leader Script

Many mothers carry shame. Shame says, I am bad. Shame says, There is no hope for me. Shame says, I will never change. Shame says, Everyone else is a better mother than I am.

But shame does not help us grow. Shame usually makes us hide, give up, get defensive, or feel stuck.

Healthy conviction is different from shame. Healthy conviction says, That choice was not good, but I can make a better choice. Healthy conviction says, I hurt my child's feelings, and I need to repair it. Healthy conviction says, I lost my temper, but I can learn how to pause next time. Healthy conviction says, I need help, and it is okay to ask for help.

This class is not about shame. This class is about growth.

Teaching Point 3: Children Need Love, Safety, and Stability

Leader Script

Write these three words on the board: Love - Safety - Stability.

Today, I want us to remember three words. Children need love. They need to know, My mother sees me. My mother cares about me. My mother wants me.

Children need safety. They need to be protected from unsafe people, unsafe places, unsafe words, and unsafe situations. Safety also means that children do not have to carry adult problems that are too heavy for them.

Children need stability. They need routines. They need consistent responses. They need to know what to expect. They need adults who try to stay calm even when things are hard.

None of us can create perfect love, perfect safety, or perfect stability. But we can begin building more of those things one step at a time.

One calmer response. One bedtime routine. One safe boundary. One apology. One hug. One prayer. One moment of listening. Small things matter.

Teaching Point 4: Your Child Does Not Need a Perfect Mother

Leader Script

Sometimes mothers think, I have already made mistakes, so what is the use? But children do not need perfect mothers. They need mothers who keep growing.

They need mothers who are willing to say: I am sorry. I love you. I am learning. I should not have yelled. Let's try that again. You are safe. I am here. I will do my best to make a better choice.

One of the most powerful things a child can see is a mother who is willing to grow. That teaches the child, I can grow too.

Key Teaching Point

Leader Script

Here is the main thought for today: Parenting growth does not begin with shame. Parenting growth begins with hope, honesty, support, and practice.

Let's say that together: Parenting growth begins with hope, honesty, support, and practice.

That is what we are going to do in this class. We are going to practice. We are going to be honest. We are going to support each other. And we are going to keep hope in the room.

Group Discussion

Time: 33-45 Minutes

Leader Script

Now we are going to talk together for a few minutes. You do not have to share anything deeply personal. Share only what you feel comfortable sharing. The purpose is not to expose anyone. The purpose is to help us realize that many mothers carry similar struggles. I will ask a question, and anyone who wants to answer may answer.

7. What makes parenting feel hard right now?
8. What kind of mother do you want your child to remember?
9. What is one thing you already do well as a mother?
10. What is one area where you want to grow?
11. What do you think children need most from their mothers?
12. What does a peaceful home feel like to you?

Leader Guidance

Some mothers may become emotional. Respond with gentleness. Helpful responses include:

- Thank you for sharing that.
- That took courage to say.
- You are not alone in that.
- That is something we can work on together.
- Many mothers feel that way.
- That is a real challenge.
- That shows your heart.

Avoid correcting deeply personal answers during this opening session unless safety is involved. This first class should build trust.

Transition to Role Play

Leader Script

Now we are going to practice. Practice is important because it is one thing to hear parenting advice, and it is another thing to know what to say in the moment.

Sometimes children say things that hurt our feelings. They may say: You don't love me. You never spend time with me. You don't understand. I hate you. You are mean.

When a child says something emotional, our first reaction may be to defend ourselves, argue, lecture, or shut the child down.

But today we are going to practice responding with calm connection. That does not mean the child gets whatever they want. It means we stay steady while we respond.

Role Play Activity by Child Age Group

Time: 45-65 Minutes

Purpose

Mothers practice hopeful, calm responses to common child statements. The goal is not to sound perfect. The goal is to practice words that create connection instead of shame, anger, or rejection.

Leader Instructions

Divide participants into groups according to the ages of their children when possible: Infant/Toddler, Preschool, School-Age, Teen. If a mother does not currently have her child with her, she should choose the group that best matches her child's age. If the class is small, complete the role plays together as one large group.

Leader Script

In each group, one person will play the mother, and one person will play the child. Then you can switch. Remember, we are not acting to be silly or embarrass anyone. We are practicing words we can use in real life. The goal is calm connection.

Group 1: Infant/Toddler

Scenario: A toddler is crying and reaching for mom while mom is tired and overwhelmed.

For mothers of infants and toddlers, the child may not be able to explain what is wrong. The child may cry, cling, scream, or reach for you. In those moments, the goal is to help the child feel safe while also helping yourself stay calm.

Unhelpful response: "Stop crying! I can't take this anymore!"

Helpful response: "You are safe. Mama is here. I am tired, but I am going to help you."

Practice instructions: Practice saying that sentence slowly and gently. Pay attention to your face, your tone, and your body. A small child responds not only to your words, but also to your tone.

Group 2: Preschool

Scenario: A preschool child says, "You don't love me!" after being told no.

Preschool children often use big words for big feelings. They may say, "You don't love me," when what they really mean is, "I am upset because I did not get what I wanted." The goal is to reassure the child without changing the boundary.

Unhelpful response: "That is ridiculous. You always act like this."

Helpful response: "You are upset because I said no. I still love you. The answer is still no."

Practice instructions: Practice saying the helpful response with warmth and firmness. The child needs both love and limits.

Group 3: School-Age

Scenario: A school-age child says, "You never spend time with me."

A school-age child may be able to express hurt more clearly, but it may come out as blame. Instead of becoming defensive, we can listen for the need underneath the words. The need may be: "I miss you," "I want attention," or "I feel unimportant."

Unhelpful response: "You don't know how much I do for you!"

Helpful response: "You are telling me you miss time with me. Thank you for telling me. Let's choose a time tonight to sit together."

Practice instructions: Practice listening first. This does not mean you agree with every word the child says. It means you are trying to hear the heart behind the words.

Group 4: Teen

Scenario: A teen says, "You don't understand anything about my life."

Teenagers may push away and still need connection. They may sound disrespectful when they are actually feeling misunderstood, angry, embarrassed, or afraid. With teens, we want to stay calm without allowing disrespect to control the conversation.

Unhelpful response: "Don't talk to me like that. You think you know everything."

Helpful response: "I may not understand everything yet, but I do want to listen. We can talk when we are both calm."

Practice instructions: Practice keeping your voice low and steady. With teens, the louder we get, the more likely the conversation becomes a battle.

Role Play Debrief

Time: 60-65 Minutes

Leader Script

Let's come back together. I know role play can feel awkward, but practicing words ahead of time helps us when real moments happen. Let's talk about what we noticed.

13. What felt hard about that role play?
14. What response felt helpful?
15. What would you normally be tempted to say?
16. How might your child respond differently if you stayed calm?
17. What is one sentence you want to remember?

Leader Encouragement

You may not say it perfectly the first time. That is okay. The goal is not perfect words. The goal is a growing pattern. Every time you choose a calmer response, you are building something new.

Practical Class Activity: My Parenting Hope Statement

Time: 65-78 Minutes

Leader Script

Now we are going to complete a handout called My Parenting Hope Statement. This handout is for you. You do not have to share all of it. It is a way to think about the kind of mother you want to become and the kind of home you want to build. Sometimes we move through life only reacting to the next problem. This handout helps us stop and ask, Where am I trying to go as a mother? Take your time. There are no perfect answers.

Guide Participants Through Each Question

Question 1: I want my child to feel...

Leader may say: Think about what you want your child to feel when they are with you. Safe? Loved? Wanted? Heard? Protected? Encouraged?

Question 2: I want my home to become more...

Leader may say: Think about the atmosphere you want to build. Peaceful? Organized? Joyful? Calm? Safe? Faith-filled?

Question 3: One thing I already do well as a mother is...

Leader may say: Do not skip this one. It matters. You need to be able to recognize your strengths, not just your struggles.

Question 4: One thing I want to learn is...

Leader may say: This could be patience, routines, discipline, school communication, safety, prayer with your child, or managing stress.

Question 5: One thing I want to change is...

Leader may say: Choose one thing. Do not write ten things. Growth usually begins with one clear step.

Question 6: When parenting feels hard, I can remind myself...

Leader may say: This should be a sentence you can use when you are tired or discouraged. Examples: I can pause before I respond. God will help me. My child needs my calm. I can try again. This moment will pass.

Question 7: With God's help, I can...

Leader may say: This is a hope statement. Write something you want to believe and grow toward.

Question 8: My motherhood word is...

Leader may say: Use the word from your card. This word can become a reminder for you during the week.

Leader Script

Would anyone like to share just this sentence? "With God's help, I can..." You do not have to share anything else from your paper.

Leader responses: Thank you. That is a strong statement. That is a beautiful goal. That is a hopeful beginning. We are going to keep building on that.

Review Questions

Time: 78-85 Minutes

Leader Script

Before we talk about the homework, let's review what we learned today. This is not a test. This is just to help us remember the main points.

Question 1: Does being a good mother mean being a perfect mother?

Leader response: No. A good mother is a growing mother.

Question 2: What are three important things children need?

Leader response: Love, safety, and stability.

Question 3: What can shame do to a mother?

Leader response: Shame can make a mother hide, give up, feel stuck, or become defensive.

Question 4: What helps a mother grow?

Leader response: Hope, honesty, support, practice, prayer, and willingness to learn.

Question 5: When a child says something emotional, what can we do before reacting?

Leader response: Pause, listen, stay calm, name the feeling, reassure the child, and keep the boundary if needed.

Homework Assignment

Time: 85-88 Minutes

10 Minutes of Focused Connection

Leader Script

Your homework this week is simple, but it is important. Spend 10 minutes of focused connection with your child.

That means for 10 minutes, you give your child your attention. Put your phone away. Do not use the time to lecture. Do not use the time to correct every little thing. Do not multitask. Just connect.

You might read a book, color together, sit outside, talk at bedtime, play a simple game, take a short walk, or let your child tell you about their day.

At the end, say one encouraging sentence, such as: I enjoyed spending time with you. I am glad you are mine. I love being with you. You are important to me.

If your child is not currently with you, your assignment is to write a short letter or prayer for your child. You do not have to send it unless that is appropriate. The purpose is to keep your heart connected. Next week, we will talk about what you noticed.

Closing Encouragement

Time: 88-90 Minutes

Leader Script

Today you took the first step in this parenting class. That matters.

You may not feel different yet. You may still feel tired. You may still have hard situations waiting for you. But today you began with hope.

Remember this: Your child does not need a perfect mother. Your child needs a mother who is willing to keep growing.

One calm response matters. One loving moment matters. One apology matters. One safe boundary matters. One prayer matters. One step matters. God can work through small faithful steps.

Closing Prayer

Prayer

Lord, thank You for what was shared and learned today. Thank You for every mother in this room. Help each one leave with hope instead of shame.

Give her patience when she is tired. Give her wisdom when she is unsure. Give her courage when she needs to change. Help her see the strengths You have already placed in her.

Bless each child represented here. Help these children feel loved, safe, and valued. Begin bringing peace and stability into each family, one step at a time. In Jesus' name, amen.

Instructor Notes

Because this is the first session, focus more on trust-building than correction. Some mothers may feel defensive because the class is mandatory. Keep the tone warm, hopeful, and practical.

Avoid language that sounds like:

- You should already know this.
- Good mothers always...
- Bad mothers...
- If you loved your child, you would...

Use language such as:

- Many mothers struggle with this.
- This is a skill we can practice.
- You are learning.
- Growth takes time.
- Let's try a better way.
- You are not alone.
- We are here to learn and grow.

PART 2 | PRINTABLE MOTHER'S HANDOUT

Print this section separately for participants

Printable Mother's Handout

Session 1: Motherhood With Hope

Name: _____ Date: _____

Main Scripture

Psalm 127:3

"Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him."

Today's Big Idea

A good mother is not a perfect mother. A good mother is a growing mother.

Parenting growth begins with:

- Hope
- Honesty
- Support
- Practice
- Prayer
- One step at a time

Children Need Three Important Things

1. Love

My child needs to know: "I am seen. I am wanted. I am loved."

2. Safety

My child needs protection, wise boundaries, and safe adults.

3. Stability

My child needs routines, calm responses, and a home that becomes more peaceful and predictable.

My Motherhood Word

Write one word that describes the kind of mother you want to become.

Why I chose this word:

My Parenting Hope Statement

1. I want my child to feel:

2. I want my home to become more:

3. One thing I already do well as a mother is:

4. One thing I want to learn is:

5. One thing I want to change is:

6. When parenting feels hard, I can remind myself:

7. With God's help, I can:

Helpful Words I Can Say to My Child

Circle the sentences you want to remember.

- You are safe.
- I love you.
- I am listening.
- I am sorry I yelled.
- Let's try again.
- I know you are upset.
- I still love you, and the answer is still no.
- You are important to me.
- I want to understand.
- We can talk when we are both calm.

Practice Sentences by Child Age

Infant or Toddler

"You are safe. Mama is here."

Preschool Child

"You are upset because I said no. I still love you. The answer is still no."

School-Age Child

"You are telling me you miss time with me. Thank you for telling me."

Teen

"I may not understand everything yet, but I do want to listen. We can talk when we are both calm."

This Week's Homework: 10 Minutes of Focused Connection

Spend 10 minutes of focused attention with your child this week.

During this time:

- Put your phone away.
- Do not multitask.
- Do not lecture.
- Do not correct unless safety is involved.
- Listen.
- Enjoy your child.
- End with one encouraging sentence.

Examples: I enjoyed spending time with you. I am glad you are mine. I love being with you. You are important to me.

If your child is not currently with you, write a short letter or prayer for your child.

My Connection Plan

This week I will connect with my child by:

After I Complete It

What did I do?

How did my child respond?

How did I feel?

What did I learn?

Closing Thought

My child does not need a perfect mother. My child needs a mother who is willing to keep growing. With God's help, I can take one faithful step at a time.