

## Five Ways Disagreeing Children are Valuable

### I. Your child is being honest.

- Consider what happens if your child doesn't agree with you, but they pretend to. If they do that to avoid conflict or simply appease you, they're just lying and creating a bigger problem.
- **Action Steps:** Thank your child for being truthful and guide them to Truth.
  1. *"Thank you for being open with me and being honest enough to tell me what you think."*
  2. *"Since you're obviously interested being truthful, let's see what God has to say about the subject."*

### II. Your child is thinking.

- The stereotype that teenagers don't use their brains is not only incorrect, but extremely disrespectful. Being able to hear an argument, formulate a belief, and communicate that idea is mature and valuable. Of course, true wisdom takes everything and pushes it through the grid of the Bible before accepting whatever comes out on the other side. But your kids aren't that mature, which is why God gave them you. Your job is to parent them by teaching them how to grapple with truth and lies.
- **Action Steps:**
  1. *"I appreciate you're trying to think through this — that's so much wiser than just feeling your way to a decision."*
  2. *"God created us to learn, He commands us to learn, and He empowers us to learn. Let's see what the Bible says about your idea."*

### III. Your child is trusting.

- When your child is being honest enough to share with you their thoughts, part of the reason they're doing is they trust you.
- **Action Steps:**
  1. *"Thanks for asking that question/sharing that thought. I'm glad our relationship's strong enough for you to be interested in my thoughts."*
  2. *"You felt comfortable bringing it up; do you trust me to respond in a way that will help you know God thinking on this?"*

... a part of the Evermind Ministries family.

#### IV. Your child is revealing themselves.

- A disagreeing child shows his hand. This is very similar to what we discussed in Episode 5, “Removing the Mask - 4 Ways to Better Understand Your Child.” If you struggle knowing your child’s heart, I recommend you give that episode a listen. For now, let me show you some of the things your child’s disagreement may reveal.
  1. They may need to be parented in what they disagreed about.
  2. They may need to be parented in how they thought through the idea they disagreed about.
  3. They may need to be parented in how they disagreed.
  4. Regardless, you now know your child better.
- **Action Steps:** I don’t normally verbalize this reality the way I do the others. I want my child to always be open and honest with me, but some kids are calculating enough to realize that the more transparent they are the more mom and dad speak into their lives.

#### V. Your child is helping.

- Christ-honoring debates are very beneficial to a growing family. In fact, our next episode is called “How to Rightly Debate Your Child.” One of the things we’ll investigate in that study is the fact that a disagreement in the home may well reveal that you’re wrong.
- **Action Steps:**
  1. *“Thank you for not only thinking this through, and not only feeling comfortable enough to talk to me about it, but for doing it in a Christ-honoring way.”*
  2. **If you’re wrong about a complicated issue:** *“I need to give this some thought. It’s obvious I haven’t been looking at this the right way. Let’s talk about this some more later after I have time to study it from the Bible and pray.”*
  3. **If you’re wrong about a simple issue:** *“You know what, you’re right. I need to work on that. Thank you for telling me what you think. Please pray for me as I deal with this flaw in my character.”*

I Corinthians 13, Paul tells us later in the passage that love “*hopes all things and believes all things.*” If I can give my children the benefit of the doubt and optimistically view our disagreements as divine opportunities for my child and I to be conformed to the image of Christ, *what could I possibly complain about?*