

## Parenting a Soft-Hearted Child

### I. Who is the Soft-Hearted Child?

- This child has a similar response to Truth that the Hard and Thorny children do. Similar to the degree that all three respond to it. Different to the degree that the Soft-Hearted Child accepts it all and genuinely puts his faith and trust in God and nothing else. He holds it fast in an honest and good heart. He's not preoccupied with the Christian lifestyle, the religious benefits, or the shiny experiences. He's enamored with God.
- When Jesus talked about thirtyfold and sixtyfold, He was giving us a picture of maturity.

### II. Do you have a Soft-Hearted Child in your home?

- Does your child love God?
- Does your child love others?
- One of the best ways to tell that your child loves God and others is this: does your child share God's Truth with others? There's nothing more important than His Word, so the best way to love God and others is share Him with them.

### III. How do you cultivate your child's Soft-Heart like Jesus did?

- Be used by God to help your Hard, Rocky, or Thorny-Hearted child soften.
  - Lovingly point your child to the necessity of a relationship with God.
  - Bring all their Thorny and Rocky responses back to God's Word. Reject the Failure Philosophies.
    - Show them their sin.
    - Show them His salvation.
- Once softened, continue pouring that same focused Truth and love into his life. Too many parents feel they've somehow completed their spiritual job by introducing their kids to Christ. And once the child is saved and the Holy Spirit is doing His work, mom and dad turn the kid over to the Christian School and church to do the rest of the discipling. But that cannot be more wrong. It's our God-given responsibility to help sanctify our children and assist them as they are conformed into the image of Christ. And we accomplish that the same way we introduced them to Jesus — speaking and living the Gospel into their lives every day.

### IV. How is it possible for a Soft-Hearted Child to have a Hard, Rocky, or Thorny response to Truth?

- In the parable some plants bore thirtyfold and some sixtyfold and some one hundred. The hearts that bear more fruit believe more of the Bible. And remember, believing God's Word is not simply knowing it or understanding it or agreeing with it. Belief bears behavior *every single time*.

## V. How do you parent a Soft-Hearted Child with a Hard, Rocky, or Thorny response to Truth?

- Explanation A Hard-Hearted response to Truth requires . . .
  - Constant Prayer
  - Constant Truth
  - Constant Love
  - Constant Engaging
- A Rocky-Hearted response to Truth requires . . .
  - Constant Prayer
  - Constant Truth
  - Constant Love
  - Constant Harvesting
  - Constant Pressure
- A Thorny-Hearted response to Truth (even when it comes from a born again believer) requires . . .
  - Constant Prayer
  - Constant Truth
  - Constant Love
  - Constant Realism

Can you think of anything that's missing? This type of parenting is founded on all that God is, empowered by His strength, and consumed with His glory. It's also flowing with love and honesty and expecting great things from our little ones when they've submitted to their Creator.