

REPENTING FROM PROVOKING CHILDREN TO ANGER

BY: Lou Priolo

1. **IDENTIFY** the specific ways you have been provoking your children to anger (See Ephesians 6:4 and list of “25 Ways Parents Provoke Children to Anger”). Write them down on a separate sheet of paper.
2. Using the list you have compiled, **CONFESS** these sins one at a time to God (See I John 1:9). Ask for His forgiveness and strength in both learning how to “put-off” the old, angry person and “put-on” the new, God-honoring person (See Ephesians 4:17–32).
3. **ASK** your child’s forgiveness for your sins against him (See Matthew 5:23–24; Acts 24:16; James 5:16).

A parent’s failure to acknowledge offenses committed against his children (& others whom they know you’ve offended) often discourages the children from practicing open biblical communication. When children perceive such insensitivity and pride in their parents, they may wrongly conclude, “It’s no use trying to talk to him, he’ll never admit to doing anything wrong.” Of course, the criteria for such communication should not be whether or not Dad will hear him, but rather, whether or not the offense is of such a nature that it cannot be overlooked (Pro. 19:11) or covered in love (Pro. 10:12; 17:9). In other words, your children should be taught to follow Matthew 18:15–17 as a necessary aspect in the relationship with you their parents, regardless of your parental response. In order to avoid provoking your children to anger in matters of offenses, I urge you to observe the following four-step approach to seeking forgiveness when you offend your child (or anyone else for that matter).

- 1) **Acknowledge that you have sinned:** “I was wrong,” or “God has shown me that I was wrong when I”
 - 2) **Identify the specific sin by its biblical name:** “What I did was selfish,” or “What I did was dishonest.”
 - 3) **Identify a biblical behavior to demonstrate your resolve to repent:** “I should have clarified what you meant before I jumped to that hasty conclusion.” “The next time I will tell the truth no matter how afraid I might be of the consequences.”
 - 4) **Ask for forgiveness:** “Will you forgive me?”
4. **DEVELOP** a plan with your child’s assistance to replace those sinful behaviors with their biblical alternatives (See Proverbs 28:13).
 5. **CONSIDER** specific ways you can provoke your children to love and good works (See Hebrews 10:24).