

Visit Five: Toddlers and Conflict Summary Points

- Toddler conflict is driven by the single impulse: “*because I want to*” or “*because I don’t want to*”.
- A toddler’s nature has “*me, myself, and I*” as the principle force of life.
- Toddlers are often controlled by a misleading sense of self-reliance which leads to conflict.
- The value you place on your beliefs is what will separate you from other parents. We place greater value on the things we hold dear. “Where our treasure is, so are the desires of our heart” (Matthew 6:21).
- Parents live in a world of right and wrong, but toddlers live in a world of “what do I want and how do I get it?” and this is why conflict comes into play.
- A child is self-oriented by nature and biblical ethics is other-oriented in purpose. The tension between the two is what produces conflict in parenting and in life.
- Toddlers do not do wrong out of a malicious heart to hurt or injure others. They do wrong things, but do not understand, initially, that they are wrong.
- Prior to age 3 toddlers do not have the cognitive ability to understand facts that are relevant to their present circumstances.
- Parents need to train toddlers in right patterns of behavior even though prior to age three they probably do not understand why we insist on their compliance.
- Trying to apply adult logic and reasoning with a toddler is not logical or reasonable.
- Do not emphasize the negative, instead elevate the virtue. Train your toddler in what to do rather than what not to do.
- Helpful catch phrase: “Use your words”. This phrase will help alleviate whining with your toddler and encourages proper speech.