

## **Marriage and Family**

### **Lesson 6 - What the Bible teaches about being a good father, mother and team**

What could help spread the cause of Christ more than Christian parents making their homes truly Christian. Parents ought to give the highest of priorities to being what God would have them to be and to bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (**Eph. 6:4**).

Crucial to the church's ability to do the job, which the Lord has given it to do, is the kind of "job" which parents do in the rearing of their children. What happens in the homes of Christians largely determines what the local church will be able to accomplish in the spreading of the gospel of Christ. This includes not only what happens between husbands and wives, but also what happens between parents and children and between brothers and sisters.

It seems clear that there is a great deal of unhappiness in the homes of our nation – even in many homes where both husband and wife are members of the Lord's church. A large amount of the unhappiness is caused by the fact human's look to materialistic gain for happiness. It is the responsibility of Christian parents to teach their children that humanity must find its happiness not in things but in the Lord (**Luke 12:15, Eph. 1:3, Gal. 2:20**).

The Godly example of a Christian life is a powerful factor in leading children to God. Fathers and mothers "preach" and teach not only by what they say but also by what they do (**Matt. 5:13-16, 2 Cor. 3:1-3, 1 Pet. 3:1-2**). Every parent needs to regularly ask themselves, "What am I teaching my children by what I do?" Children are keenly observant and will recognize the discrepancies between what we say and what we do. Our children may hear what we say but they most certainly will see what we do.

The Bible – as God's infallible message to man – is all sufficient to provide man with the knowledge he needs to live in such a way so that he might spend eternity with God (**Rev. 2:10, Gal. 6:6-9, Gal. 5:16-23, 2 Pet. 1:2-11**). That being the case, the Bible teaches what parents should and should not do in the rearing of their children.

#### 1. Ugly facts

1.1. Let us consider these facts provided by the Census Bureau:

1.1.1. The majority of America's 73.7 million children under age 18 live in families with two parents (69 percent), according to new statistics released today from the U.S. Census Bureau. This is compared to other types of living arrangements, such as living with grandparents or having a single parent.

1.1.2. The second most common family arrangement is children living with a single mother, at 23 percent.

- 1.1.3. Between 1960 and 2016, the percentage of children living in families with two parents decreased from 88 to 69. Of those 50.7 million children living in families with two parents, 47.7 million live with two married parents and 3.0 million live with two unmarried parents.
- 1.1.4. During the 1960-2016 period, the percentage of children living with only their mother nearly tripled from 8 to 23 percent and the percentage of children living with only their father increased from 1 to 4 percent. The percentage of children not living with any parent increased slightly from 3 to 4 percent.
- 1.1.5. As of 2000, girls without fathers in their lives are 2.5 times more likely to get pregnant and 53% more likely to commit suicide.
- 1.1.6. As of 2000, boys without fathers in their lives are 63% more likely to run away from home and 37% more likely to use drugs.
- 1.1.7. As of 2000, boys and girls without father involvement are twice as likely to drop out of school, twice as likely to go to jail and nearly four times more likely to need help for emotional or behavioral problems.
- 1.1.8. As of 2000, the average American father spends only 7 ½ uninterrupted minutes per WEEK with his children.
2. What parents need to understand about our children
  - 2.1. Becoming a parent is one of the major turning points in a couple's life. While the experience of parenthood can bring great rewards, it also brings to a couple new challenges and new adjustments.
    - 2.1.1. Over the years, people have approached parenting with feelings of joy and expectation; some are eventually disappointed by the day-to-day realities of rearing a child.
    - 2.1.2. Parents have the most difficult task in the world--to rear happy, healthy children to be well-adjusted adults--and they must do this in a complex and ever changing society. The Bible, God's word, places the awesome responsibility of child rearing on parents (**Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4**).
    - 2.1.3. Effective parenting is an absolute necessity because parents in reality are only one among numerous influences on the development of children.
  - 2.2. Parents Are Only One Influence in a Child's Life
    - 2.2.1. Peer groups, teachers, church members, public opinions and the mass media are influential.
      - 2.2.1.1. Parents are the first significant influence, but peer influence becomes increasingly important and remains so into the college years. During the teenage years, children are likely to mirror the values and behaviors of their friends and classmates.
      - 2.2.1.2. Therefore, ***parents should be cautious of their children's associates*** because they will have an effect, positive or negative, on their spiritual and emotional development.
        - 2.2.1.2.1. Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."  
1 Cor 15:33

- 2.2.2. Television is another powerful influence on children. Television is a major means of exhibiting language, values, and lifestyles to children that may be different from those of the parents.
  - 2.2.2.1. Time in front of TV – 2009
    - 2.2.2.1.1. Age 2-5 – 32 hours a week
    - 2.2.2.1.2. Age 6-8 – 28 hours a week
  - 2.2.2.2. Time in front of a screen of some sort – 2015
    - 2.2.2.2.1. Age 5-16 – 6.5 hours a day; 8 hours per day for teenagers
    - 2.2.2.2.2. Compare to 3 hours per day in 1995
  - 2.2.2.3. There are abundant studies that support the conclusion that behavior can be shaped by what our children watch on television and the sites they visit on the Internet.
- 2.3. Parents need to be sure that they have and are socializing their children.
  - 2.3.1. What do I mean?
  - 2.3.2. To prepare for life (transitive verb)
  - 2.3.3. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.” **Hosea 4:6**
    - 2.3.3.1. In many cases we don’t know basic biblical principles and our spiritual foundation is weak
  - 2.3.4. America is fighting a culture war. The central issue is God & the Bible.
    - 2.3.4.1. “75% of all children raised in “Christian” homes who attend public schools will reject the Christian faith by their first year of college.
    - 2.3.4.2. In many cases we are sending our most precious gifts—our children, out into the world without any armor! Some Christian homes have not even acknowledged that there is a fight going on.
    - 2.3.4.3. “Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” (Ephesians 6:13-17)
  - 2.3.5. If children are going to be able to resist the influences of Satan’s forces and accept the influence of their parents, and if the children are going to obey and serve God, then the parents must instill in them God's teachings and values.
  - 2.3.6. Parents will either be the dominant influence in a child’s life or someone/something else will.
    - 2.3.6.1. Dominant - predominant; main; major; chief (adj.)
    - 2.3.6.2. Not cruelty, hardness, inability to listen and communicate

2.3.6.3. **Eph. 6:4** - And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

2.3.6.3.1. Nurture (v) - to feed and protect: to support and encourage, as during the period of training or development; foster: to bring up; train; educate.

2.3.6.3.2. Admonition (n) - counsel, advice, or caution; a gentle reproof.

#### 2.4. Parenthood Demands Change As Children Grow Up

2.4.1. Parents need to know and to remember that the demands of parenthood change as the children move through various developmental stages. Each of these stages exhibit different behaviors and require different emotional, and social resources from parents.

2.4.2. Over time, children grow from a stage of total dependence to one of total independence. It becomes a challenge for parents to know how much freedom/autonomy to give at what age. It's important that children be given a degree of autonomy and responsibilities to develop spiritually, emotionally, and socially.

#### 2.5. Principles of effective parenting

##### 2.5.1. Provide Praise

2.5.1.1. Studies show that children depend on their parents for the development of their self-concept or self-image; therefore it is important that parents regularly praise them. One of the most important facts about parenting is that approximately 85 percent of a person's ultimate personality is developed by the time he or she is six years old. IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO START!

2.5.1.2. The effect is to create good feelings that the child has about himself or herself. It is important that a child feel good about himself or herself. This thought is well supported by psychologists, sociologists and family therapists. What a difference it would make if parents would praise their children's good behavior and good deeds!

##### 2.5.2. Discipline Inappropriate Behavior

2.5.2.1. Parents must provide limits to children's behavior. This sometimes involves punishing negative behavior. Unless parents provide negative consequences for lying, stealing, and hitting, children can grow up to be dishonest, steal, and use inappropriate aggressive behavior.

2.5.2.1.1. Time out, removing the child from being with others to a place of isolation for a period of time, withdrawal of privileges (watching television, being with friends, participating in an activity), or physical punishment have been shown to be effective means of discouraging inappropriate behavior.

2.5.2.1.2. The Bible clearly calls for reproof and spanking as ideal punishments for children (**Prov. 13:24; 22:15; 23:13-14**).

2.5.2.1.3. **WITH ANY DISCIPLINE TECHNIQUE, PARENTS SHOULD MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THEY DISAPPROVE OF THE CHILD'S BEHAVIOR, NOT THE CHILD.**

### 2.5.3. Provide Security

2.5.3.1. Predictable responses from parents, and an established routine help to encourage a feeling of security in children. Such a feeling provides them with the needed self-assurance to venture beyond the family.

2.5.3.1.1. If the outside world becomes too frightening or difficult, a child needs to know that he or she can return to the security of the family for support. Children need to know that it's possible to return to a place of physical, mental and spiritual safety.

2.5.3.1.2. This does NOT include the acceptance of sin in their lives.

2.5.3.1.3. Parents must condemn sin regardless who commits it.

2.5.3.2. What portrait of God are you painting at your house?

2.5.3.2.1. Only a God of love and grace?

2.5.3.2.1.1. **Is. 59:2** – But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

2.5.3.2.1.2. **Deut. 10:12-13** – And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, To keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?

2.5.3.2.2. Somewhere along the way we have forgotten that our sole job with our children is to return them unto God Who gave them. Simply put, our sole job is a soul job!

2.5.3.2.3. As we look at each generation—is your spiritual foundation as strong as your parents and grandparents. Are you teaching your offspring? Will your grandchildren make it to heaven?

2.5.3.2.4. Parents condoning sin will only cost their child it's soul.

### 2.5.4. Encourage Responsibility

2.5.4.1. For children to be able to leave their parents later in life and be assertive in society, then giving them increased responsibility is a must.

2.5.4.2. Children not given some control and responsibility for their own lives remain dependent on others. To ensure that children learn to be independent, parents need to give children increasing responsibility that is age appropriate

## 3. Being a good team

- 3.1. Understand this is NOT a competition!
- 3.2. Assume your God defined role in the family.
- 3.3. Your children that need parents that will:
  - 3.3.1. Love them
    - 3.3.1.1. **Prov. 22:6**
    - 3.3.1.2. **Prov. 19:18**
    - 3.3.1.3. **Tit. 2:5**
  - 3.3.2. Listen to them
    - 3.3.2.1. You can't live in the same house but in separate worlds!
      - 3.3.2.1.1. The lines of communication MUST be opened when they are young.
      - 3.3.2.1.2. Are you truly home when you are home?
    - 3.3.2.2. You MUST work hard at being accessible, being open to what they have to say, and finding time to COMMUNICATE with them (**James 3:17**).
  - 3.3.3. Limit them
    - 3.3.3.1. They need to understand the sin which is "disobedient to parents" (**Rom 1:30; 2 Tim. 3:2**).
    - 3.3.3.2. The book of Proverbs is full of exhortations to parents to take seriously their responsibility to discipline their children (**Prov. 13:18; 15:5; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; 29:17**).
  - 3.3.4. Let Go
    - 3.3.4.1. We cannot live life for our children. They have to live it for themselves.
    - 3.3.4.2. They must learn to make their own decisions, fight their own battles and be responsible for their own actions.
  - 3.3.5. Lead them to God
    - 3.3.5.1. Parents CANNOT force their children to live right or to love God.
    - 3.3.5.2. You can provide the right circumstances and examples for their children to develop their own faith and commitment to God.
  - 3.3.6. Remember that every child needs two Christian parents.
  - 3.3.7. Help your child learn about limits,
  - 3.3.8. Help your child learn that every action has consequences: some happy and some disappointing.
  - 3.3.9. Allow each child to be an individual and never compare him with others.
  - 3.3.10. Never promise or threaten that which you do not intend to carry out. Offer authentic manifestations of love, not just superficial ones. Teach your child basic principles of leadership.
  - 3.3.11. Do not condone the faults of your children through a misguided sense of loyalty.
  - 3.3.12. Be careful always to be a good example.
- 3.4. Teach your children that God loves them and that they can have a close relationship with him.
  - 3.4.1. **John 3:16**

- 3.4.2. **Rom. 5:8**
- 3.4.3. **1 Cor. 10:13**
- 3.4.4. **1 Tim. 2:4**
- 3.5. Understand the extreme blessing and responsibility God has bestowed upon you (**Gen. 33:4-5; Prov. 22:6**).
  - 3.5.1. The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.
  - 3.5.2. Every leader of our world, godly or ungodly, was once a child sitting on the knee of a parent.
  - 3.5.3. Provide training and correction for your children.
    - 3.5.3.1. See what happens when Eli does not (**1 Sam. 3**).
  - 3.5.4. You are the guardians of an inheritance (**Prov. 13:22**).
  - 3.5.5. Show your love for your children by word, conduct, and by physical contact (hug, kiss, etc.) Children should be recognized and praised for their accomplishments, and corrected for their misconduct.
- 3.6. Children should be exposed to a consistent, godly example in word and deed from both parents.
  - 3.6.1. Joseph, son of Jacob and Rachel (**Gen. 28-50**)
- 3.7. Parent's need to seriously consider the spiritual damage which quarreling, bickering, and fighting can – and does – inflict, not only on each other but also upon their children.
  - 3.7.1. Children want and need for their parents to love each other.
- 3.8. Spend time with your children.
  - 3.8.1. Quality time does NOT take the place of quantity time.
  - 3.8.2. Spending money on your children is not an adequate substitute; it sends the wrong message about priorities.
- 3.9. Answer your children's questions.
  - 3.9.1. They will get the answers from somewhere.
- 3.10. Shun bad environments, unlike Lot in **Genesis 13:12**.
- 3.11. Do NOT show favoritism to a child over others as Jacob did in **Genesis 37**.
- 3.12. Teach your children honesty, unlike Rebekah in **Genesis 27**.
- 3.13. Teach your children of the actions and goodness of God (**Exodus 13:8-14**).
- 3.14. Never underestimate the power of evil or worldly allurements (**Eph. 2:2, Is. 56:11-12**).
  - 3.14.1. Children should be taught to have the resolution of Moses (**Heb. 11:24-26**).
  - 3.14.2. Of Christ (**Matt. 4:1-11**)
- 3.15. Be consistent and fair in the punishment of your children
- 3.16. Parents should pray for their children (**1 Sam. 12:23**).
- 3.17. Parents should teach their children:
  - 3.17.1. About Marriage
    - 3.17.1.1. About the sexual relationship in marriage.
    - 3.17.1.2. About whom to marry.

- 3.17.1.3. About what God intends for married life to be like (the biggest lesson in this area should come by the example the children see everyday).
  - 3.17.2. About respect.
  - 3.17.3. About building and maintaining human relationships.
  - 3.17.4. About sin.
  - 3.17.5. To believe in God.
  - 3.17.6. To believe in the Bible as the word of God.
  - 3.17.7. To love and worship God.
  - 3.17.8. About the power of the blood of Christ to save
  - 3.17.9. About living a Christian life
4. Being a good father
- 4.1. He accepts being the role of leadership in the family
    - 4.1.1. **Eph. 5:22 – 6:4**
  - 4.2. He accepts being a father with great joy.
    - 4.2.1. **Proverbs 17:6**
  - 4.3. He accepts the responsibility that goes with being a father.
    - 4.3.1. Love – **Luke 15:11-32**
    - 4.3.2. Nurture – **Is 1:2, Numbers 11:12**
    - 4.3.3. Teach – **Deut. 6:6-7**
      - 4.3.3.1. Kindness – by being thoughtful and considerate at home
      - 4.3.3.2. Honesty – by keeping promises and living as he directs others to live
      - 4.3.3.3. Courage – living unafraid and trusting God
      - 4.3.3.4. Justice – by being fair to all alike
      - 4.3.3.5. Teach children how to cope with life in all its relationships - with parents, brothers and sisters and friends. Christian fathers should be always careful that these attitudes are spiritually instilled and that his children learn to face life with assurance and self-confidence born of a strong faith in Christ.
      - 4.3.3.6. Godliness – by living obediently to God (**1 Tim. 4:12**)
    - 4.3.4. Instructs – **Proverbs 1:8, 1 Thess. 2:11**
    - 4.3.5. Train – **Proverbs 22:6**
    - 4.3.6. Find time for his children
    - 4.3.7. Provide for his family
      - 4.3.7.1. Physical needs - **1 Tim. 5:8**
      - 4.3.7.2. Spiritual needs – **Deut. 32:46-47**
    - 4.3.8. Be patient – **Eph. 6:4, Colossians 3:21**
    - 4.3.9. Discipline – Total training of the child
      - 4.3.9.1. It must be established that the father, as well as the mother, is the authority over children.
        - 4.3.9.1.1. Ask yourself, who controls the actions of our household, the parents or the children? Who runs the house?
        - 4.3.9.1.2. Father's must be a strong, controlling influence in the home and, as children grow older, a father's hand on the



reins becomes increasingly important. Boys especially need a strong image to identify with.

4.3.9.2. Punishment and reprimand are elements of discipline.

4.3.9.2.1. Make sure the child understands that the discipline is done in love not anger and that the discipline is based on disapproval of the action, not of the child themselves. Discipline is necessary but must be exercised patiently, and for the good of all concerned.

4.3.9.2.2. Harshness and bitterness – ruling with an iron hand will only serve to provoke children and run them off.

4.3.9.2.3. Bible instruction for discipline:

4.3.9.2.3.1. **Prov. 3:12**

4.3.9.2.3.2. **Prov. 22:13**

4.3.9.2.3.3. **Heb. 12:5-9**

4.4. He knows how to cry

4.4.1. He is no less a man when he cries over the right things.

4.5. He can admit when he is wrong

5. Being a good mother

5.1. She should appreciate the great privilege of motherhood.

5.1.1. Motherhood is a special and dignified position. Woman is uniquely qualified for the great work of bearing children, of keeping the home, and of fostering love, companionship, and security for her husband and children. God endowed the female with qualities of reacting more emotionally and mercifully than man to special needs and situations, of showing more love and sympathy, and of being able to more adequately minister to the demands of the child.

5.1.2. It was woman who gave birth and reared Christ (**Luke 1:26-38**).

5.1.3. The Law of Moses demanded that:

5.1.3.1. Mothers be honored (**Exodus 20:12**) and respected (**Lev. 19:3**).

5.1.3.2. Her teaching was not to be abandoned (**Proverbs 1:8; 6:20**)

5.1.3.3. She was not to be despised, mocked, or scorned (**Prov. 15:20; 17:25; 19:26; 23:22; 30:17**)

5.1.4. To have a child is a tremendous joy

5.1.4.1. **Gen. 21:6-7; Luke 1:46-55; Psalms 113:9**

5.2. She should honor and treat with dignity sacred human life in the womb

5.2.1. **John 16:21**

5.2.2. Millions of unborn children have died since the Roe v. Wade decision came down in 1973. Abortion is murder, and murder is a sin (**Romans 13:9**).

5.2.3. The fetus has all properties that are essential to being a human being. In **Psalms 139:13-16**, David makes reference to when he was in his mother's womb. The pronouns "me", "my", and "I" are used throughout the passage in reference to David's pre-natal state.

5.2.4. One of the clearest statements in the Bible concerning the humanity of a fetus is found in **Jeremiah 1:5**. In this passage

Jeremiah states that the Lord knew him before he was born and that the Lord sanctified him as a prophet while he was still in his mother's womb.

- 5.2.5. Two nations struggled in Rebekah's womb (**Gen. 25:22-23**).
- 5.2.6. John showed life in the womb of Elizabeth (**Luke 1:44**).
- 5.2.7. As for other forms of abuse and neglect of the fetus, such as drinking, drugs, smoking etc., read **I Cor. 6:19**. The body within you is a temple of God.
- 5.3. She is responsible for much more than simply bringing children into the world.
  - 5.3.1. She and her husband complement each other in the molding of their children into what God would have them to be. God put the husband and wife together so that the parental unit could function.
- 5.4. She should love her children
  - 5.4.1. Along with her husband she gives good gifts to her children
    - 5.4.1.1. **Matthew 7:9-11**
    - 5.4.1.2. **2 Corinthians 12:14**
  - 5.4.2. Shows the proper kind of love (**1 Corinthians 13:4-8**).
  - 5.4.3. Older women are to teach the younger to love their children (**Tit. 2:4, 1 Cor. 13:4-7**).
- 5.5. She should be a good woman
  - 5.5.1. Mary "found favor with God," thus he was with her (**Luke 1:28-30**).
  - 5.5.2. **Proverbs 31**
- 5.6. She should guide and teach her children
  - 5.6.1. A major portion of the mother's time will be spent with her children leading and protecting them. Children go in the direction that they are aimed. The Hebrews realized how important it was to pass the godly life-style to their children (**Deut. 11:18-21**).
  - 5.6.2. Elizabeth was righteous and blameless (**Luke 1:6**). She passed this onto John.
  - 5.6.3. The faith that Eunice exhibited was evident in the life of Timothy (**2 Tim. 1:5**).
- 5.7. She is a comforter
  - 5.7.1. **Isaiah 66:13**
- 5.8. She must exercise proper discipline upon her children
  - 5.8.1. She must be an extension and complement to the rules laid down by the husband.