

SHEPHERDING A CHILD'S HEART Child Training and Discipleship—Part 1

Joshua 24:14-16—“Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. **Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD. Then the people answered, ‘Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods.’**”

- 1. We are not going to serve the gods of our forefathers.**
- 2. We are not going to serve the gods of our culture.**
- 3. We are going to serve the Lord.**

Our desire in the discipleship of our children

1. Know God—for them to know His love (1 John 4:16).
2. Follow God—for them to put their trust in God.
3. Glorify God—for them to show Him forth in every area of their lives. See His life in all of their lives and learning. No compartmentalization in their lives; this can lead to decisions that are based on their own desires and human wisdom.
4. To embrace wisdom, knowledge, understanding.
 - ❑ Proverbs 4:7—“Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.”
 - ❑ Proverbs 24:3, 4—“By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches.”
 - Wisdom—God’s desired perspective and choice
 - Understanding—God’s desired application
 - Knowledge—God’s desired truth
5. To have the fear of God in their lives.
 - ❑ Fear of God is beginning of wisdom. Proverbs 9:10—“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.”
 - ❑ Fear of God is the beginning of knowledge. Proverbs 1:7—“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

Parenting

You have more power than you ever imagined. The power you have in your child’s life is more than anything else except the living God.

What kind of Christianity are you inviting your children to?

1. Does it bring life, joy, and freedom in Christ, love, inner holiness, personal convictions and Biblical examples in people and you?
2. Is it lifeless, out of duty and obligation, fear, filled with hypocrisy, judgmental, and with no regard for the supremacy of Christ?

Our Mission: As parents we are called by the Lord to have our children's hearts and to train and equip them to fulfill their God given life purpose.

- Proverbs 22:6—"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."
- Psalms 127:3-5— "Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them!"

Parenting is a fierce battle for the heart of our children. You know evil will hunt them. But they have been chosen by God; there is a glory to their life and it is your mission to fight for them, to protect them, to find that glory in them and call it out, to affirm it, to bless it and to send them out. This kind of parenting is a blessing.

For most parents, parenting becomes a battle to just get their children in line and to get them to behave. This kind of parenting is very draining and burns everyone out.

God uses parenting to teach us all sorts of things about ourselves and our relationship with God.

Parenting is accepting the God given responsibility of discipling our children.

Stages of Maturity

Stage 1—Infant (Age 1-3)

Goal: Learning to receive from others

Stage 2—Child (Age 4-12)

Goal: Taking care of themselves

Stage 3—Adult (Age 13 to Birth of 1st Child)

Goal: Taking care of two people simultaneously in a mutually satisfying relationship.

I. DEVELOPING A HEART FOCUSED, GRACE BASED, DISCIPLESHIP LIFESTYLE WITH OUR CHILDREN.

- Enjoy your children as individuals by taking joy in their unique existence by being glad to be with them. (They all need to feel like the beloved son or daughter.)
- Love them unconditionally when they fail; this helps them experientially understand God's love for them.
- Meet their spiritual, emotional, and physical needs without them asking or causing them to feel guilty. Meeting your children's needs helps them to learn to receive.

- Praise their unique characteristics (gifting, passions, godly desires and godly character traits).
- Understand them when they are having emotional difficulties and help them return to joy.
- Motivate your children with a loving attitude, encouraging their faith, bringing hope, teaching them reverence for God, and appealing to their conscience in discipline, instead of using fear tactics, anger, shame, and condemnation.
- Teach them about Godly character through your own example, Scripture, good books, historical leaders, and examples in our current day.
- Enjoy being together as a family on a regular basis. (Glad to be together)
- Have your own family traditions that define your own family's identity.
- Take time to tell stories (i.e. when you were growing up, about your children before they can remember, and family times together).
- Being glad to be with them in what brings them joy.

II. CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHILD DISCIPLINE

Spirit—Defined in Hebrew as wind and in the Greek as air current—it is spiritual in nature. Your spirit is comprised of your conscience, intuition, and communion with God and others.

Conscience—“internal or self-knowledge, or judgment of right and wrong; or the faculty, power, or principle within us which decides on the lawfulness or unlawfulness of our own actions and affections, and instantly approves or condemns them”

- We must keep it void of offense toward God and man. (Example: Never let the sun go down on your wrath.)
 - Acts 24:6—“So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward both God and man.”
- We must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath, but also for the sake of conscience.
 - Romans 13:5—“Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.”
- We protect our consciences by submitting to authority. A pure conscience and faith will keep one from shipwreck.
 - 1 Timothy 1:5— “The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.”

- Our conscience can be seared through believing lies.
 - 1 Timothy 4:2— “Through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared.”

Application

1. Do not use behavior modification methods that are popular today.
2. Appeal to their conscience (function of their spirit) (Acts 24:16).
3. DO NOT spank/discipline your children when you are reacting out of uncontrolled fleshly anger.
4. Transform your child’s soul through the Law of God.
5. Establish your authority as a parent before your child by the time they are 4 years old.
6. Show your children their need for Christ on a regular basis.
7. Help them learn important biblical principles (Obedience, Work, Order, Reconciliation, Sowing and Reaping, etc...).
8. Be consistent in your discipline, standards, and expectations for your children
9. Unity—with parents in discipline is vital (never disagree in front of your children).
10. Understand what motivational system you are operating out of with your children. Is it fear based or loved based? (If you have a difficult time with this, you might want to get some counsel as to why.)
11. Explain whys to your children when necessary. (This helps them to understand cause and effect.)
12. Teach them the principle of sowing and reaping.

PERSONAL EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. What kind of Christianity are you inviting your children to?
2. What steps do you need to take in communicating God’s love to your children?
3. What concerns do you have concerning your child’s conscience?
4. Do you think your children honor you? Why or why not?