

CGYG-LIFE Marriage-Family Life group
Session 3: (April 2, 2011)
Raising Children, part 1

Recap of previous session:

- Roles of members of a family
 - Husband/father – provides leadership to the family
 - 3 key aspects: authority, responsibility, sacrifice
 - Wife/mother – follows & supports the husband/father's leadership → fosters harmony & being in the home
 - 3 key aspects: submission, building/nurturing, wisdom
 - Children – live in obedience under the authority of their parents

Today, we'll begin considering issues related to raising children. Topics to be discussed over the next several sessions will include:

- the goal of parenting
- discipline
- training & instruction/education
- exasperating your kids

The Goal of Parenting: Godliness

“Has not the Lord made them one?... And why one? **Because He was seeking godly offspring...**” (Malachi 2:15)

-throughout the OT as well as the NT, the repeated emphasis regarding parenting is to teach and raise your children in the knowledge & fear, training & instruction of the Lord (e.g. Deut. 4:9; 6:4-9, 20-25; 11:18-21; Prov. 22:6; Ephesians 6:4) → the accent is on children who will know and serve the Lord

“These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” (Deut. 6:6-7)

-whatever other goals or ambitions we may have for our children need to be subservient to this one

-as discussed in session #1, this does not come naturally – requires **deliberate effort & intentionality**, both on the part of our own lives as parents, and in the way we raise our children

- our personal lives as examples of godliness
- homes and daily lives structured in a way that facilitates teaching by precept and by example

For discussion: How does the goal of godliness intersect with other goals we may have for our children (e.g. in terms of education, future career plans, activities we might want to get them involved in such as sports, music, etc.?)

Training and instruction/education

“Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” (Eph. 6:4)

-the primary responsibility for educating children lies with the parents, **not** with the state or school or church or anyone else

-school, church, etc. can be very helpful, but ultimate responsibility lies with the parents

-most instruction in Scripture regarding teaching children deals with issues of character and training in godliness

-but our responsibility as parents is not limited just to instruction about “spiritual” things

-e.g. since working to provide for oneself, one's family, as well as for others is part of Godliness (e.g. Eph. 4:28; 2 Thess. 3:6-13; 1 Tim. 5:8), we are also responsible to ensure our children are sufficiently educated in a vocation to be able to make a living

-teaching wisdom in all aspects of life (e.g. Proverbs 2)

-training and instruction includes both “formal” and “informal” instruction – both should be age-appropriate

-“**informal**” instruction – not necessarily structured or planned, in the sense of having set times or curriculum

-takes place by example, and as opportunities arise in the ebb & flow of life; includes teaching basic life skills

-e.g. “Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” (Deut. 6:7)

-but it does take intentional effort to structure your lives so that opportunities can arise, and to take the opportunities as they arise

-begins with the examples you set as parents → are you demonstrating wisdom and pursuing godliness in your own life? Do you have credibility to speak into their lives?

-involves ordering life together in a way that shows that God (not you or your family) is the priority → What are the priorities in your life & in your family? Does the way you live (e.g. how you spend time, money, etc.) teach your kids that God is central, or that they are the centre of the universe?

-requires being available and having time to spend together – e.g. answering questions, talking about things that have happened in the day or things they’ve seen on TV, books they’ve read, etc.

-requires developing good relationships with your children, particularly as they grow older

-requires an awareness of what the influences are in your children’s lives (who their friends are, what they are reading, TV shows, music, internet, social media, etc.

-requires that you are sufficiently grounded yourself to be able to answer the (sometimes difficult) questions your children may ask

-“**formal**” instruction – structured/planned times of teaching

-within the home

-**Scripture memorization**

-**Family devotions** & other times of teaching (e.g. table talk – combination for formal/informal)

-“**home schooling**”

-outside the home

-need to consider how these will help or hinder you in your responsibility to teach & instruct your children

→ important particularly for teaching outside the home to aware of what is being taught

-also, who their friends are, and what are the influences in their lives what they are reading, what they are watching (TV, internet) or involved in (social media, etc)

-**church** – getting involved in teaching children/youth in the Church

-**school** – public vs. private vs. Christian vs. homeschooling

-**other settings** (music lessons, sports, camps, etc.) – how will these help or hinder?